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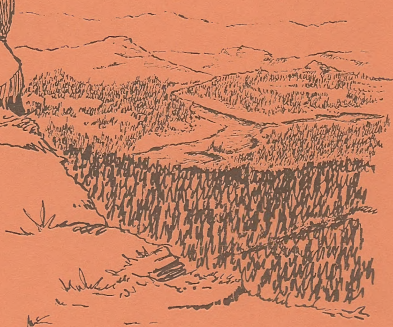
BLM : INTENSIVE
WILDERNESS
INVENTORY

PROPOSED
WILDERNESS
STUDY AREAS

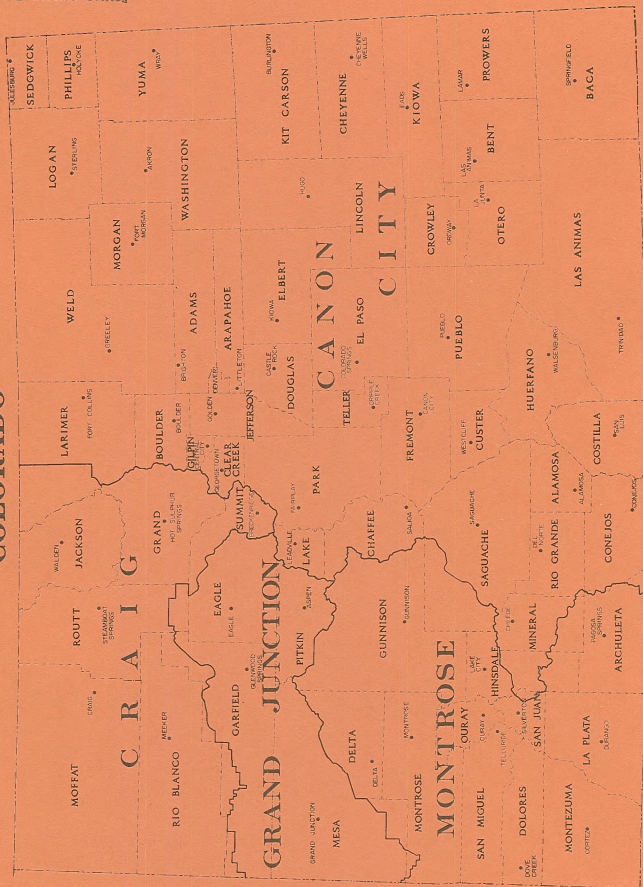
FEBRUARY 1980



COLORADO
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COLORADO



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United States Department of the Interior

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 DENVER, COLORADO 80202

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February 1, 1980

I am pleased to announce that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed another major step in the wilderness review of the public lands in Colorado. The release of this report marks the beginning of a 90-day public review of my proposed intensive wilderness inventory decision.

During the intensive wilderness inventory, 119 inventory units containing over 1,317,000 acres of roadless, essentially natural public lands in Colorado were examined in detail to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. As a result of the intensive inventory field work, I have determined that 66 inventory units totaling approximately 815,048 acres do contain wilderness characteristics, and that 53 inventory units and approximately 501,756 acres do not.

I have been pleased with the public interest in the wilderness inventory to date. I again ask that you give the proposed decision contained in this document your careful consideration. The information you provide on the wilderness characteristics of these areas, especially the presence or absence of naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, will be of great help to me in formulating my final decision. The formal 90-day public review period begins February 1, 1980 and ends April 30, 1980.

After analyzing and evaluating the comments received, I will formulate a final decision on which areas do or do not contain wilderness characteristics. Those which do will become Wilderness Study Areas, studied through the BLM land use planning system, and a recommendation reported to Congress as to whether or not they are suitable for designation as "Wilderness Areas."

I extend my sincere appreciation to those individuals and organizations who have participated thus far in this endeavor and request your continued help.

Sincerely yours,

DALE R. ANDRUS
 State Director



Save Energy and You Serve America!

Bureau of Land Management
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COLORADO STATE DIRECTOR'S
PROPOSED INTENSIVE WILDERNESS
INVENTORY DECISION

FEBRUARY 1, 1980

	PROPOSED AS WSA		NOT PROPOSED AS WSA	
<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u># UNITS</u>	<u># ACRES</u>	<u># UNITS</u>	<u># ACRES</u>
Craig	10	148,853	29	168,111
Montrose	31	339,853	5	68,177
Canon City	12	86,532	3	36,646
Grand Junction	13	239,810	15	228,822
TOTAL	66	815,048	53	501,756*

*This is an approximate figure and includes boundary adjustments as well as units dropped.

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INTENSIVE INVENTORYRECOMMENDATIONS

<u>INVENTORY NUMBER</u>	<u>AREA NAME</u>	<u>PROPOSED AS WSA</u>	<u>NOT PROPOSED AS WSA</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<u>Craig District</u>				
CO-010-001	Bull Canyon	X		25
CO-010-002	Willow Creek	X		27
CO-010-003	Skull Creek	x		29
CO-010-006B	Pinyon Ridge		X	49
CO-010-007A	Black Mountain	X		31
CO-010-007B	Berry Point		X	51
CO-010-007C	Windy Gulch	X		33
CO-010-046	Oil Spring Mountain	X		35
CO-010-00N1-N6A	Adjacent to DNM (South Boundary)		X	47
CO-010-155	Troublesome	X		37
CO-010-168	Drowsy Water		X	53
CO-010-178	Yarmony Mountain		X	55
CO-010-208	Cold Springs West	X		39
CO-010-208E	Limestone		X	57
CO-010-210	Irish Canyon		X	59
CO-010-210D	Douglas Draw		X	61
CO-010-214	Diamond Breaks	X		41
CO-010-230	Cross Mountain	X		43
CO-010-218- 271/N6B	Adjacent to DMN (9 Units)(N.Boundary)		X	63
UT-080-104	Wild Mountain		X	67
UT-080-110	Hoy Mountain		X	69
UT-080-114	Pot Creek		X	71
<u>Montrose District</u>				
CO-030-053A	Steers Gulch	X		75
CO-030-057	Willow Creek	X		77
CO-030-063	Dillon Mesa	X		79
CO-030-085	Bill Hare Gulch	X		81
CO-030-086	Larson Creek	X		82
CO-030-088	Sparling Gulch	X		83
CO-030-089	Powderhorn ISA	X		85
CO-030-208	Red Cloud Peak	X		87
CO-030-210	Rambouillet Park		X	129
CO-030-211	Slumgullion Slide	X		89
CO-030-212	Waterdog Lake		X	131
CO-030-213	Friends Creek	X		91
CO-030-217	American Flats	X		93
CO-030-229A	West Needles Contiguous	X		97

<u>INVENTORY NUMBER</u>	<u>AREA NAME</u>	<u>PROPOSED AS WSA</u>	<u>NOT PROPOSED AS WSA</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<u>Montrose District (Continued)</u>				
CO-030-229B	Needle Creek	X		95
CO-030-230B	Whitehead Gulch	X		98
CO-030-238B	Weminuche Contiguous	X		99
CO-030-241	Handies Peak	X		101
CO-030-251	Menefee Mountain	X		103
CO-030-252	Weber Mountain	X		105
CO-030-253	Mesa Verde Contiguous		X	133
CO-030-262	Hamilton Mesa		X	135
CO-030-263	Rare Lizard & Snake ISA		X	137
CO-030-265	Cross Canyon	X		107
CO-030-265A	Squaw/Papoose Canyons	X		109
CO-030-265D	Cahone Canyon	X		111
CO-030-286	McKenna Peak	X		113
CO-030-290	Dolores River Canyon/ Coyote Wash	X		115
CO-030-300	Tabeguache Creek	X		117
CO-030-310A	Sewemup Mesa	X		225
CO-030-332	Baldy Peak Contiguous	X		119
CO-030-353	Camel Back	X		121
CO-030-363	Dominguez Canyon	X		191
CO-030-370A	Kannah Creek			
	Contiguous	X		181
CO-030-370B	Adobe Badlands	X		123
CO-030-388	Black Canyon of the Gunnison Contiguous	X		125
<u>Canon City District</u>				
CO-050-002	Browns Canyon	X		141
CO-050-010	Bear Mountain		X	167
CO-050-013	McIntyre Hills	X		143
CO-050-014	Lower Grape Creek	X		145
CO-050-016	Beaver Creek	X		147
CO-050-017	Upper Grape Creek	X		149
CO-050-033	Crystall Falls	X		151
CO-050-131	Black Canyon	X		153
CO-050-132B	South Piney Creek	X		155
CO-050-135	Sand Castle	X		157
CO-050-137	Papa Keal	X		159
CO-050-139B	Zapata Creek	X		161
CO-050-140	Flat Top		X	169
CO-050-141	San Luis Hills	X		163
CO-050-142	Twin Peaks		X	171

<u>INVENTORY NUMBER</u>	<u>AREA NAME</u>	<u>PROPOSED AS WSA</u>	<u>NOT PROPOSED AS WSA</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<u>Grand Junction District</u>				
CO-070-001	Prairie Canyon		X	205
CO-070-009	Demaree Canyon	X		177
CO-070-015	Cow Ridge		X	207
CO-070-015A	Hunter Canyon		X	209
CO-070-015B	Garvey Canyon		X	211
CO-070-031	South Shale Ridge		X	213
CO-070-066	Little Bookcliffs			
	Wildhorse Area	X		179
CO-070-103	Kannah Creek	X		181
CO-070-103A	Kannah Creek North	X		183
CO-070-113	Black Ridge Canyons	X		185
CO-070-113A	Black Ridge Canyons West	X		187
CO-070-130	Bangs Canyon		X	215
CO-070-130A	Rough Canyon		X	217
CO-070-132	The Palisade	X		189
CO-070-132A	Granite Creek		X	219
CO-070-132B	Renegade Creek		X	221
CO-070-138	West Unaweep		X	223
CO-070-150	Dominguez Canyons	X		191
CO-070-150A	Gunnison River		X	225
CO-070-176	Sewemup Mesa	X		193
CO-070-316	Grand Hogback		X	227
CO-070-338	Storm King		X	229
CO-070-372	Thompson Creek		X	231
CO-070-392	Eagle Mountain	X		195
CO-070-421	Pisgah Mountain		X	233
CO-070-425	Hack Lake	X		197
CO-070-430	Bull Gulch	X		199
CO-070-433	Castle Peak	X		201

INTRODUCTION

Contained within this book are the Bureau of Land Management's recommendations on those BLM administrated lands in Colorado which qualify as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) and those which do not. Please note that BLM is not now recommending that these areas should or should not be designated wilderness by Congress. BLM has determined that some inventory units in Colorado do contain wilderness characteristics as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964 and that some do not. The areas that do meet these characteristics will be designated WSAs and will be studied to determine whether or not they are suitable for Wilderness. This "study" will take place at a later date, as the schedule in this book indicates. Every WSA will be reviewed and acted upon by Congress, whether or not, after the study is complete, the BLM deems them suitable for designation as "Wilderness Areas".

These recommendations are the result of Intensive Inventory field-work conducted during the summer and fall, 1979. All procedures for evaluating wilderness criteria found in inventory units are noted in the BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook, published September 27, 1978. Copies of the handbook are available from any office of the Bureau of Land Management.

The summary narratives included here are summaries of more detailed intensive inventory reports available in the BLM Colorado State Office and the appropriate District and Area Offices. These summaries present a brief, overall picture of Colorado's intensive inventory recommendations. For more detailed, site specific information, refer to the file documentation. Larger, more detailed maps and photographs are also contained in these files.

This report initiates the 90-day public comment period for the intensive inventory, which runs from February 1 to April 30, 1979. All comments must be received by the Colorado State Office of the BLM no later than April 30, 1980 to be utilized in the State Director's final decision on which units will become WSA's and which will not.

I. BACKGROUND

A. Overview of BLM's Wilderness Review Process

The BLM's wilderness review process will be completed in three phases. These are: Inventory, Study and Report.

Phase I - Inventory: The inventory phase has two parts, initial and intensive. Its overall purpose is to identify those public lands having wilderness characteristics as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Initial Inventory: In this stage, public lands administered by the BLM which clearly and obviously do not have wilderness characteristics were identified. Existing information, such as maps and aerial photos, and input received from the public were utilized to make this decision. Three criteria must be met for an area to be recommended for intensive inventory. Each must be: (1) at least 5,000 acres in size or contiguous to a proposed or existing wilderness area, (2) roadless, and (3) substantially free of man's imprints.

The proposed initial inventory decision was released by the Colorado State Director March 22, 1979. A 90-day public comment period followed, from May 1 to July 31, 1979. The final decision was released August 31, 1979, becoming effective for all inventory units December 13, 1979. A total of approximately 6,685,000 acres of "public land" in Colorado were released from wilderness consideration.

Intensive Inventory: In this stage, as reflected in this report, field surveys were conducted. Each area was examined to determine the presence or absence of wilderness qualities listed in the Wilderness Act: naturalness, the presence of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and the presence of supplemental values. For an area to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area, it must be substantially natural and have either outstanding opportunities for solitude or outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. A total of approximately 1,311,000 acres of public land contained within 119 inventory units were intensively inventoried in Colorado. Each of these areas are discussed in this book.

Fieldwork for the intensive inventory was conducted during the summer and fall, 1979. As this report indicates, the proposed Wilderness Study Area decision for Colorado was released February 1, 1980. The public comment period for this proposed decision begins February 1, 1980 and ends April 30, 1980. A final decision on which areas will be

Wilderness Study Areas will be released in July or August, 1980. A 30-day appeal period will follow.

Phase II - Study: The study phase of the Wilderness Review will be completed as a part of regional comprehensive land-use plans. During each planning effort, the public will have several opportunities to comment upon other resource values within a Wilderness Study Area. These comments will be considered in making land-use decisions prior to subsequent recommendations to the President and Congress on an area's suitability or unsuitability as Wilderness. This phase will begin as soon as the final Wilderness Study Area decision is made in late summer, 1980.

Phase III - Report: Recommendations on an area's suitability or unsuitability for wilderness designation are reported to Congress through the Secretary of the Interior and the President. Reports on all WSAs must be submitted to the President by September 21, 1991.

B. Instant Study Areas (ISA's)

All existing natural or primitive areas automatically become Instant Wilderness Study Areas. Congress directed that all designated primitive and natural areas currently administered by BLM be inventoried and evaluated on an accelerated schedule to determine their suitability for wilderness designation (Section 603, FLPMA). Five of these areas are located in Colorado and are identified on the Initial Wilderness Inventory Map.

These are:

<u>Unit Name</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Number</u>
North Sand Hills	Craig	CO-010-108
Needle Rock	Montrose	No Assigned
High Mesa Grassland	Canon City	CO-050-009
Rare Lizard and Snake	Montrose	CO-030-263
Powderhorn	Montrose	CO-030-089

Intensive Inventories and Study Reports (to be sent to Congress) have been completed for North Sand Hills, Needle Rock and High Mesa Grassland, with the recommendation that these areas do not have wilderness characteristics. Public reviews were held in 1979, and the reports which will be submitted to Congress can be examined at the appropriate District Office or in the State Office in Denver.

The report on the suitability of Rare Lizard and Snake ISA as wilderness will be deferred until its contiguous lands are inventoried. The intensive inventory recommendations are

found on page 137 of this book.

The Powderhorn ISA was determined to have wilderness characteristics in the intensive inventory which was conducted in 1978-79. An explanation of intensive inventory results is contained on page 85 of this report. A land-use plan completed in Spring 1979 recommended the area be designed as a "Wilderness Area" by Congress. A draft environmental statement will be available for public review by June, 1980.

C. Definitions

Terminology specific to the BLM Wilderness Review Process has evolved throughout the inventory process. To facilitate better communication, the following terms elaborate on definitions already given in the Wilderness Inventory Handbook.

Cherrystemming: An unofficial term used to describe the way an inventory unit boundary is drawn to exclude a road that enters the unit; the resulting boundary resembles a cherry stem.

Contiguous Lands: Lands or legal subdivisions having a common boundary. Lands having only a common corner are not contiguous.

FLPMA: Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, which mandated the BLM Wilderness Review. Often referred to and pronounced "FLIPMA".

Instant Study Areas: Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act mandated that all primitive or natural areas formally identified prior to November 1, 1975, will be studied for wilderness suitability and recommended to the President by July 1, 1980. These existing primitive and natural areas are called Instant Study Areas, or ISAs.

Inventory Unit: Areas of public lands indexed for easy reference at the start of the wilderness inventory. All BLM lands in Colorado are within an inventory unit; these units may or may not be roadless. An official file for each unit is maintained at the BLM State and District offices and is available for public review.

Non-Public Land Inholdings: All non-federal lands, including state, county, or private land located within the inventory units. These lands are not calculated in the acreage being evaluated for wilderness nor are they being inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

Public Lands: Any land and interest in land owned by the United States and administered by the Secretary of the

Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except:

- lands located on the Outer Continental Shelf
- lands held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos
- lands in which the United States retains the minerals, but the surface is private.

Only public land is being inventoried for wilderness purposes. (This is the definition used for purposes of this inventory).

RARE II: The wilderness inventory on lands administered by the Secretary of Agriculture through the United States Forest Service. The acronym stands for Roadless Area Review and Evaluation, and the "II" signifies that it is the second time the Forest Service has inventoried and evaluated the lands it administers for wilderness values.

Road: For the purposes of the BLM's wilderness inventory, the following definition is adopted: "The word 'roadless' refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road."

To clarify this definition, the following subdefinitions also apply:

"Improved and maintained" - Actions taken physically by man to keep the road open to vehicular traffic.

"Improved" does not necessarily mean formal construction.

"Maintained" does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.

"Mechanical means" - Use of hand or power machinery or tools.

"Relatively regular and continuous use" - Vehicular use which has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources; access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities; or access roads to mining claims.

Roadless: Refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use.

Roadless Area: That area which is roadless, as defined above, and is bounded by a road, the edge of a right-of-way, other land ownership, or a significant imprint of man.

Situation Evaluation: Each wilderness inventory unit, whether roadless or not, has a situation evaluation written for it, describing the roads, size, and general naturalness of the area. These are the file documents associated with the initial inventory and are available at the district and state BLM offices.

Solitude: Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are wilderness characteristics examined in the intensive wilderness inventory. Factors contributing to opportunities for solitude are vegetative screening, topographic relief, vistas, and physiographic variety.

Supplemental Values: Features of ecological, geological, or other scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value that may be present in an inventory unit. These are not necessary criteria for wilderness suitability, as is stated in the Wilderness Act of 1964, but must be assessed during the intensive wilderness inventory.

Way: A two-wheel track created only by the passage of vehicles. A "way" is not a road.

Wilderness: The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 is as follows: "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. Wilderness is an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Wilderness Area: An area formally designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Wilderness Characteristics: Those characteristics of wilderness as described in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act. These include size, naturalness, solitude, primitive or unconfined type of recreation, and supplemental values.

Wilderness Inventory: An evaluation of the public lands in the form of a written description and a map showing those

lands that meet the wilderness criteria as established under Section 603(a) of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act. The lands meeting the criteria will be referred to as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). Those lands identified as not meeting wilderness criteria will be released from further wilderness consideration.

Wilderness Review: The term used to cover the entire wilderness inventory, study, and reporting phases of the wilderness program of the BLM.

D. Interim Management Policy (IMP)/Air Quality

During the period of the wilderness review and until Congress acts on the President's recommendations on what areas are suitable for wilderness designation, the Secretary of the Interior is required to manage those lands having wilderness characteristics so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness, subject to certain exceptions and conditions. This management is referred to as "interim management" and is discussed in a recently released document entitled Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review. This is available at any BLM office.

The BLM's role in Air Quality redesignation, discussed in the IMP publication, should be reiterated here, since much confusion has arisen over this issue. Under the Clean Air Act (as amended, 1977), all BLM-administered lands were given Class II air quality classification, which allows moderate deterioration associated with moderate, well-controlled industrial and population growth. The BLM will continue to manage wilderness study areas as Class II. The Department of the Interior will not recommend reclassification to the more strict Class I in connection with future wilderness recommendations resulting from the BLM wilderness review. The two processes are separate and distinct, and are accomplished under two different laws, FLPMA and the Clean Air Act. Recommendations for wilderness designation are made by the BLM through the Secretary of the Interior and the President to Congress. Air quality reclassification is the prerogative of the States, and it must follow a process mandated by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977, involving a study of health, environmental, economic, social, and energy effects, a public hearing, and a report to the Environmental Protection Agency. The Department will not recommend any change in air quality classification as part of wilderness recommendations.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A. Overview

This report initiates the 90-day public comment period on Colorado BLM's proposed Intensive Inventory decision (February 1, 1980 to April 30, 1980). To insure that your comments can be effectively utilized at this point in the wilderness inventory, we encourage you to comment on the presence or absence of the following wilderness characteristics, as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964:

- * Naturalness
- * Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or
Primitive, Unconfined Recreation
- * Supplemental Values
- * Possibility of the Area Returning to a
Natural Condition

Several factors contribute to the presence of these characteristics and were used in evaluating each inventory unit. The explanation of each of these factors follows. If your assessment of the presence or absence of any of these characteristics agrees with or differs from ours please make your comments known to us on the comment sheets included in the back of the book.

The analysis of comments will not involve "vote-counting". Comments will be examined for their informational value regarding the wilderness characteristics of an inventory unit. One comment specific to these characteristics that offers the BLM new information or that sheds new light on an issue could result in a change to the recommendation on an inventory unit. Conversely, should the BLM receive large numbers of comments opposing or supporting WSA designation without reference to the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics, the recommendation may have little affect on the final WSA decision.

Information concerning other resource values and potential conflicts in the inventory units will not be considered until the study phase of the Wilderness Review and will not affect the inventory decision being made at this point in the review.

B. How Wilderness Characteristics are Evaluated

1. Naturalness

"...generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable..."
Wilderness Act 1964

The area must appear to be generally natural. An area may include some imprints of man provided they are substantially unnoticeable. Trails, signs, bridges, fences, stream barriers, snow gauges, spring developments, and the like may be permitted in a WSA, if they are substantially unnoticeable and do not detract from the overall naturalness of the area.

Imprints of man outside a unit are not normally considered in assessing the area's naturalness.

2. Solitude or a Primitive and Unconfined Type of Recreation

"Has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation..."

Wilderness Act 1964

Two key words appear here: "or" and "outstanding". Either opportunities for solitude or opportunities for primitive recreation must be present for an area to qualify as a WSA; both need not be present. These opportunities must be outstanding in order for an area to qualify as a WSA. Opportunities for either solitude or primitive recreation may exist in an inventory unit, but if these opportunities are not outstanding, the area does not qualify as a WSA.

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are defined by the physical setting of an inventory unit:

- * Vegetative screening - Does the area have diversity of grasses, trees, shrubs? How thick is the growth and how does it screen individuals from one another?
- * Topographic screening - Does the topographic variation help screen individuals from one another within an inventory unit?
- * Configuration of an inventory unit - Is the unit of a reasonably blocked configuration? Do "cherrystemmed" roads exist, possibly affecting solitude opportunities?
- * Size in conjunction with topography and vegetation - For example, a flat, non-vegetated unit of 100,000 acres might have outstanding opportunities for solitude, while a similar unit of 5,000 acres might not.
- * Vastness versus intimacy - Does the area have long vistas? Are there opportunities to be secluded?

Examples of primitive and unconfined types of recreation are:

Hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, spelunking, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, river running, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, dog sledding, photography, bird watching, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, or geological features.

How do the topographic and vegetative features enhance or inhibit these kinds of activities?

Identify specifically where opportunities for primitive recreation are located. Keep in mind that these opportunities include potential as well as present use.

3. Supplemental Values

"...ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

Wilderness Act 1964

The presence or lack of supplemental values, such as ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical importance will not determine whether an inventory unit becomes a WSA. These values are not essential for WSA status. However, it is important that the presence or absence of these types of features in an area be noted, especially their location.

This information will be valuable in phase two, study. Using the BLM planning system these supplemental values can be protected and managed to preserve and enhance their uniqueness under other administrative procedures, if wilderness designation is not made.

Again, we need this information in map form.

4. Possibility of the Area Returning to a Natural Condition

Most imprints of man having a significant impact on the naturalness of an area are excluded from intensive inventory units. When the impact of man's imprints is only moderate, there is often the possibility of returning the area to a substantially unnoticeable level by natural processes or hand labor. This is dependent on the kind of imprint, the topography, the vegetation, the amount of rainfall, and so forth.

C. How Comments Will be Utilized

Every public comment received by the BLM during the 90-day public comment period (February 1 - April 30, 1980) will be read, analyzed, and when necessary, field checked for validity. The appropriate District Managers and district office wilderness staffs will read each letter relating to their respective inventory units, and will address the points raised in each letter on a response form. This form will be attached to the letter and kept in the file of the inventory unit(s) being referred to. A copy of each response form will be sent to the BLM State Office in

Denver where all will be reviewed for consistency and filed in the Public Affairs Office in the appropriate inventory unit(s) file. The original letters will all be kept on file in the State Office in Denver. If maps and photos are enclosed in a letter, these will be sent to the district office for review. The inventory unit files may be reviewed upon request.

After the conclusion of the public comment period, an overall statewide analysis will be compiled by the State Office. This will provide an overview of the kind of comments received, who wrote in, and what inventory units were of predominate concern to the public. By July, the report can be examined in the district offices or the State Office in Denver.

Information provided by the public will be considered and could change the recommendations on what areas should and should not become Wilderness Study Areas, when the comments reveal the presence or absence of Wilderness characteristics that the BLM has not identified. The factors being evaluated in the intensive inventory are somewhat subjective, so public input is critical in making these difficult decisions.

D. Where to Send Wilderness Mail/Public Meetings

Send all correspondence to:

WILDERNESS
Colorado State Office
Bureau of Land Management
Main Post Office Building
Post Office Box 2266
Denver, Colorado 80201

All comments will be forwarded to the appropriate district offices.

Comments must be received by the BLM State Office by April 30, 1980. Comments received after that date cannot be considered in the intensive inventory.

General information on the status of the Wilderness Review is available to the public by calling:

837-3613 (Denver area local calls)
1-800-332-3805 (rest of Colorado)

While wilderness mail should all be sent to the above address, the following district offices have copies of files and can be contacted:

Canon City District Office:
275-7494
3080 East Main Street
Canon City, Colorado 81212

District Manager:
Mel Clausen
Wilderness Specialist:
Phillip Neal

Craig District Office:
824-3417
455 Emerson Street
Post Office Box 248
Craig, Colorado 81625

District Manager:
Marvin Pearson
Wilderness Specialist:
Vaughn Baker

Grand Junction District Office:
243-6552
764 Horizon Drive
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

District Manager:
Dave Jones
Wilderness Specialist:
Wade Johnson

Montrose District Office
249-7791
Highway 550 So.
Post Office Box 1269
Montrose, Colorado 81401

District Manager:
Marlyn Jones
Wilderness Specialist:
Jon Sering

In Denver contact:

Colorado State Office
Colorado State Bank Bldg.
Room 700, 1600 Broadway
Denver, Colorado 80202

State Wilderness Coordinator:
Harold Belisle - 837-3393

Meetings will be held throughout the state to inform you on the recommendations made in this book, to discuss the BLM Wilderness Review, and to answer questions and obtain input on these recommendations. The schedule for these meetings is as follows:

February 12 - Craig -
- 7 PM -

BLM Little Snake Resource Area
Headquarters, 1 Block South of
Highway 40 on Mack Lane (west
side of Craig)

February 13 - Grand Junction -
- 1 PM & 7 PM -

BLM Grand Junction District
Office, 764 Horizon Drive

February 14 - Montrose -
- 1 PM & 7 PM -

Montrose County Courthouse Annex
South 1st and Cascade

February 20 - Canon City -
- 1 PM & 7 PM -

Ramada Inn, Highway 50 & Dozier Ave.

February 21 - Denver -
- 1 PM & 7 PM -

Regency Inn - Waterloo Room,
3900 Elati (I-25, Exit 108, 38th)

Staff specialists will be available to answer questions concerning all BLM districts at each of these meetings. Additional meetings will be held by the BLM District Offices, with dates announced through local newspapers.

III. FORMAT OF THIS REPORT

All wilderness inventory units which were intensively inventoried are included in this book. Some of these are recommended as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) and some are not. The summary narratives are arranged by district; within each district section, the summaries for the recommended units are separated from the non-recommended units. Within these final subdivisions, the inventory units are arranged in numerical order.

District prefix numbers are:

- 010 - Craig
- 030 - Montrose
- 050 - Canon City
- 070 - Grand Junction

The degree of detail both in the file documentation in the various offices and in the summaries presented here depends upon the size of the inventory unit, the number of imprints of man within the unit, and the number of boundary adjustments made since the conclusion of the initial inventory.

Minor acreage changes between the final initial inventory boundaries and the intensive inventory boundaries may not be the result of a boundary adjustment. Acreages have been recalculated in some cases to insure more accuracy. Boundaries will be legally described and acreages specifically calculated this spring by BLM's Cadastral Survey.

In all cases, non-public land inholdings are not calculated in the acreage being inventoried for wilderness characteristics, nor are these lands themselves inventoried. When possible, these inholdings are shown on the enclosed maps. In some cases, particularly with patented mining claims, these inholdings are too small to be noted on the maps, but then will be mentioned in the accompanied narrative.

Each summary narrative is accompanied by a map, most of which are 1/2-inch-to-the-mile in scale. When intensive inventory fieldwork required boundary adjustments, a dotted line represents the old boundary (final initial inventory boundary). The intensive inventory unit recommended as WSAs are outlined in a solid black line and are shaded. Non-recommended units are outlined in black but are not shaded. References to more detailed maps are listed on the enclosed maps as well:

Colorado State Planning Office Photo Maps

These are enlarged from high altitude vertical aerial photographs, and lack annotation of place names, cultural and natural features, etc. They correspond in scale (1:24,000) and area covered to a standard 7 1/2 minute U.S. Geological Survey

topographic map and are identified by the same name. However, when purchasing through the Colorado State Planning Office (Centennial Building, 1313 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203), they must be identified by the four digit number shown in the study unit summary.

U.S.G.S. Topographic

These are the standard 7 1/2 minute topographic maps (scale 1:24,000) prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey. For some of the study units the topographic map coverage may be 15 minute quadrangles (scale 1:62,500). The U.S. Geological Survey sells the maps, as do some bookstores.

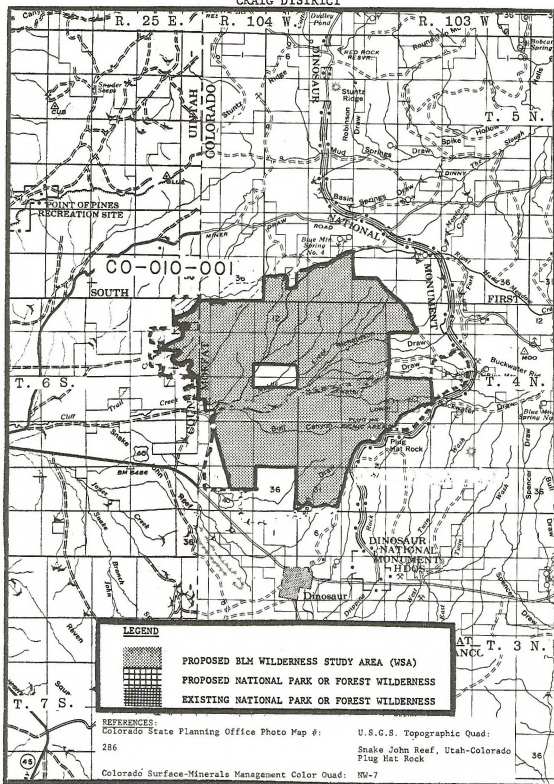
Colorado Surface Minerals Management Color Quad

These are Bureau of Land Management maps, scale 1/2 inch equal to one mile, covering areas of approximately 30 miles x 36 miles. They show Federal land ownership - National Parks and Monuments, National Forests, and Bureau of Land Management administered lands, and private lands in which various minerals have been reserved to the United States. They can be purchased from the Bureau of Land Management District and Resource Area Office in which the study units are located. The enclosed maps are black and white copies of these maps.

CRAIG DISTRICT

AREAS RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

24 INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION

Size	CO - 11,777 acres UT - 520 acres	Inventory No.	CO-010-001 UT-080-419
	Total - 12,297 acres		
District	Craig, CO/Vernal, UT	Area Name	Bull Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Along the Colorado-Utah border, north of U.S. 40 (Moffat County, Colorado and Uintah County, Utah).

NOTE: During the initial inventory, two units (1A and 1B) were identified in Colorado. Field investigation during the fall of 1979 determined that the "road" separating the two units had been originally constructed in portions but was not being maintained to insure regular and continuous use. This "road" did not meet the road definition used in BLM wilderness inventory. The units have been combined for further wilderness consideration.

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Bull Canyon unit contains approximately 12,297 acres of contiguous public land. The boundaries were adjusted in Colorado to exclude private land, a powerline, ways, and reservoirs. The surrounding lands are predominantly public lands with the Dinosaur National Monument road/right-of-way located to the east. About 520 acres are in the Vernal District of Utah. Minor boundary adjustments were made in Utah to exclude narrow, small pieces of public land extending from the bulk of the unit. A private inholding of 320 acres exists in the Colorado portion of the unit. This private land was not inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The unit has oil and gas and grazing leases.

NOTE: The final combined acreage for this unit is approximately 4,000 acres less than the acreages reported in the initial inventory for Units 1A and 1B. The minor boundary adjustments made during the final intensive inventory do not account for this difference. An electronic planimeter was used to compute the final acreages; thus, the original acreage figures were in error.

NATURALNESS:

The Bull Canyon Unit offers a wide variety of topographic relief. The dominant features are the canyons created by eroded sandstone. Bull Canyon is the dominant landform within the unit. It is a four mile long, extensively eroded sandstone drainage which combines with K Creek, Middle Creek, Richardson Draw and Buckwater Draw to form a highly scenic canyon land area. Cottonwoods line the streambeds with pinyon-juniper the dominant vegetation in the remainder of the unit. Minor imprints of man can be found in the forms of a jeep trail and broken reservoir. These imprints do not represent significant surface disturbances. Natural revegetation is occurring which diminishes the visual impact. The bulk of the unit remains in a natural condition.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the large size, blocked configuration, rugged topography and dense vegetation of the unit, the opportunities for solitude are outstanding. On the higher elevations in the unit, a visitor would be aware of wide open spaces, and have numerous vistas which can enhance a feeling of solitude. The canyons provide numerous opportunities to become isolated from others.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The outstanding scenery of the canyonlands, interesting geology, and big game wildlife values of the unit contribute to a variety of primitive recreational opportunities. These include hunting, hiking, photography and wildlife and scenic viewing. The cumulative effect of the recreation resources give this unit outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

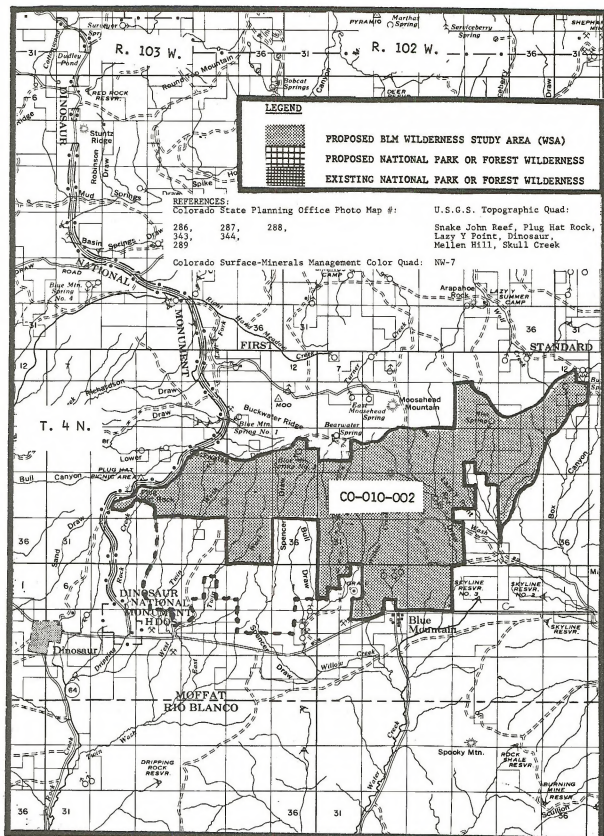
Historic: The Dominguez/Escalante Expedition camped near the present location of K Ranch, to draw water from a flowing well and to hunt buffalo. The encampment is well documented in Escalante's diary, written in 1776.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Natural rehabilitation is occurring within the unit resulting in the imprints of man returning to a substantially noticeable condition. Natural processes or hand labor would effectively rehabilitate the minor imprints of man.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A WILDERNESS STUDY AREA:

This area has long been recognized and valued for its truly outstanding scenery. The highly eroded sandstone canyons provide numerous opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The imprints of man are few in number leaving the area in a natural condition. This area is the primary focus of two scenic overlooks developed by the National Park Service on the adjacent Dinosaur National Monument road. The area meets all of the wilderness inventory criteria and is, therefore, recommended for further study.



1/2 1 2 3 4

1/2 in. = 1 Mile

26

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 14,008 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-002
Area Name Willow Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast of the town of Dinosaur, north of U.S. 40 (Moffat County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Willow Creek unit contains approximately 14,008 acres of contiguous public land. The boundaries were adjusted to exclude several imprints related to oil and gas activity and grazing in the southwestern portion of the unit. These ways were constructed for past oil and gas exploration and continue to be used by ranchers and recreationists, primarily hunters. The distribution of these imprints resulted in evidence of man's activities being substantially noticeable in the SW portion of the unit; thus, the boundaries were adjusted to exclude these imprints. The lands surrounding the unit are predominantly public lands. Initial Inventory Units Twin Wash and Lazy Y Point were combined to form Willow Creek due to the absence of a valid boundary road. The unit has grazing leases. Oil and gas leases exist but are presently under moratorium.

NATURALNESS:

The Willow Creek Unit is dominated by 1000 foot sandstone cliffs that rise in the north of the unit and fall to the south creating a canyon-land effect. The unit ranges in elevation from approximately 5,860 feet to 8,115 feet. The sandstone canyons contain many interesting geologic formations. Pinyon-juniper is the dominant vegetation with some cottonwoods in the drainages. The unit, after boundary adjustments, appears to be natural with a few minor imprints of man in forms of ways and trails. These imprints are growing over in most instances.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The relatively large size of the unit gives individuals room to disperse themselves. The rugged terrain provides ample topographic screening and would enable visitors to isolate themselves from others in the unit. Numerous vistas also enhance a feeling of solitude. Taken cumulatively, the opportunities for solitude are outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The outstanding scenery, unusual geology and big-game wildlife values of the unit contribute to a variety of primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities. These include hunting, hiking, photography, and scenic and wildlife viewing. The cumulative effect of these resources give the unit outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Twelve fossil-bearing formations exist in this unit. Significant prehistoric information may be found in these formations that are the same as those currently being studied in Dinosaur National Monument. This area is currently being studied by a research group from the University of Arizona to confirm the suspicions that the pinyon-juniper trees here are the oldest of their kind. While little has been done in the way of cultural studies of this area, it is suspected that much information may exist in the form of artifacts to shed new light on the Fremont-age Indians. Dense lithic material, granaries and petroglyphs exist in sufficient numbers to implicate this.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

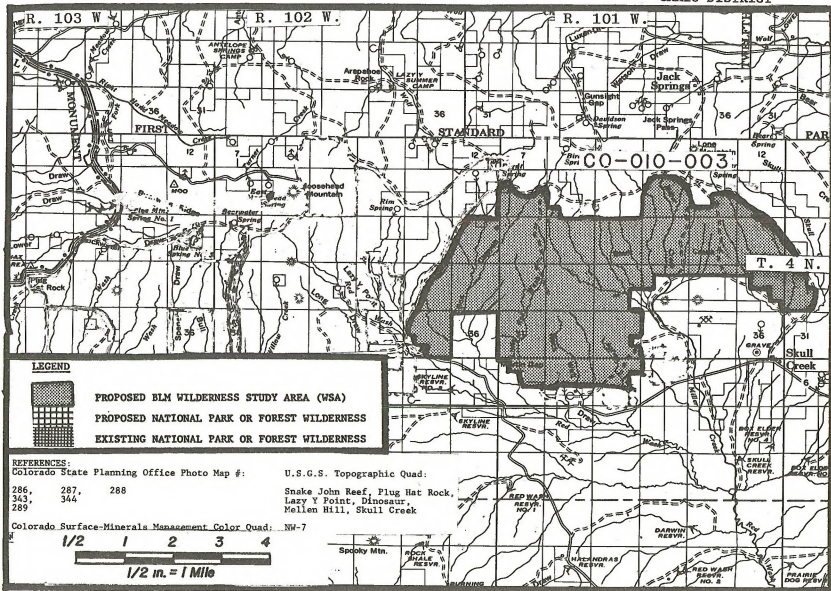
Natural rehabilitation is occurring within the unit resulting in the imprints of man returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition. Natural processes or hand labor would effectively rehabilitate the minor imprints of man.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A WSA:

The Willow Creek Unit is a large tract of undeveloped public land retaining much of its natural character. The eroded sandstone cliffs, rock formations and pinyon-juniper forests offer outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation. The area has been recognized in the BLM planning system for its outstanding scenic, cultural, and recreation resources. The unit meets the criteria for further wilderness study.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 13,740 acres
District Grays

Inventory No. CO-010-003
Area Name Skull Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 10 miles east of the town of Dinosaur, north of U.S. 40 (Moffat County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Skull Creek Unit contains approximately 13,740 acres of contiguous public land. The lands surrounding the unit are predominantly private and state owned. Minor boundary adjustments were made during initial inventory to exclude narrow fingers of land protruding from the bulk of the unit. No further boundary adjustments have been made. Grazing is authorized in the unit. Oil and gas leases exist but are presently under moratorium.

NATURALNESS:

The Skull Creek Basin is a breached anticline of the Juniper Plateau. The terrain is steep and rugged ranging from 5,920 feet to 7,112 feet creating a canyon-land effect. The Skull Creek rim is north and east of this unit. Pinyon-Juniper is the dominant vegetation. Traces of man's imprints can be found including two Jeep trails and an abandoned drill pad. These imprints are growing over so the cumulative effect is minor. The remainder of the unit remains in a natural condition.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The relatively large size of the unit gives individuals room to disperse themselves. The rugged canyonland terrain of the Basin and the dense vegetation would enable visitors to isolate themselves from others in the unit. Taken cumulatively, the opportunities for experiencing a feeling of solitude are outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The outstanding scenery, geologic rock formations and variety of big game wildlife in this unit contribute to a variety of outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The opportunities include hunting, hiking, photography, and scenic and wildlife viewing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

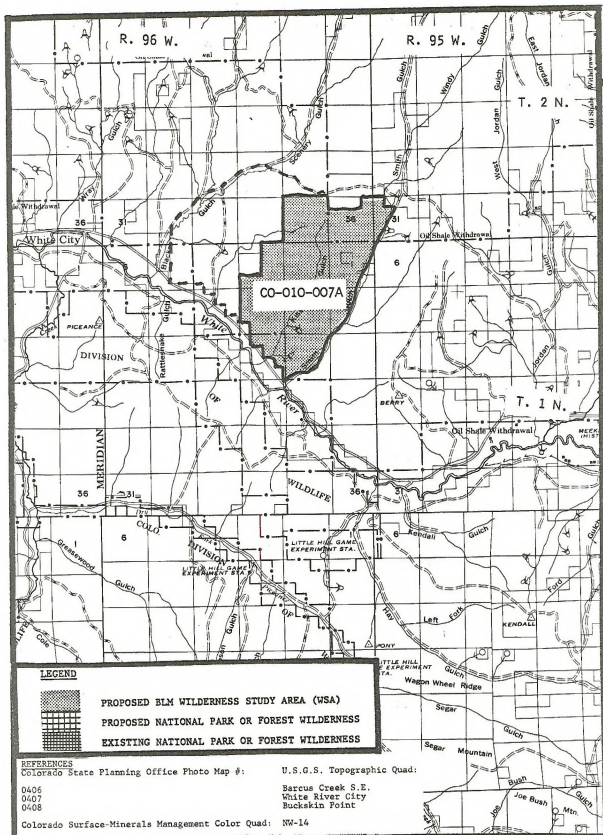
Twelve fossil-bearing formations exist in this unit. Significant prehistoric information may be found in these formations that are the same as those currently being studied in Dinosaur National Monument. While little has been done in the way of cultural studies of this area, it is suspected that much information may exist, in the form of artifacts, to shed new light on the Fremont age people. Dense lithic material, granaries, and petroglyphs exist in sufficient numbers to implicate this.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Natural rehabilitation is occurring within the unit resulting in the imprint of man returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition. Natural processes or hand labor would effectively rehabilitate the minor imprints of man.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A MSA:

The Skull Creek Unit is a large tract of undeveloped public land retaining much of its natural character. The eroded sandstone basin with its canyons and pinyon-juniper forests offer outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation. The area has been recognized in the BLM planning system for its outstanding scenic, cultural and recreation resources. The unit meets the criteria for further wilderness study.



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

30

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION

Size	5,077 acres	Inventory No.	CO-010-007A
District	Craig	Area Name	Black Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: West of Meeker (Rio Blanco County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Black Mountain unit contains approximately 5,077 acres of contiguous public land. No boundary adjustments were made during the initial inventory. The boundary was adjusted during intensive inventory to exclude a system of ways, a pipeline, and a powerline. The boundary adjustment also excluded 160 acres of private land that had previously been an inholding in the unit. Surrounding lands are private to the south along the White River with public lands to the north, east and west. Unit 7B to the east is separated from this unit by a system of ways in Smith Gulch. The unit has one grazing lease and numerous oil and gas leases.

NATURALNESS:

Black Mountain, a high ridge running the length of the unit, dominates the area. The highest point on Black Mountain is 7,205'. Black Mountain provides numerous vistas of the surrounding landscape including the White River Valley. Numerous drainages create rugged slopes on all sides of Black Mountain. Kissinger Gulch penetrates Black Mountain essentially cutting into two ridges. The unit is densely vegetated with pinyon-juniper and mountain brush, with some Douglas Fir on Black Mountain. As noted, the boundary was adjusted to exclude major imprints of man. These imprints (ways, powerline, pipeline) are located in the NW portion of the original unit. This part of the unit is very open with little vegetative or topographic screening resulting in the imprints being substantially noticeable. Continued use by ranchers and hunters impedes the natural revegetation of the ways. The remainder of the unit, after boundary adjustments, remains in a natural condition. Three remnants of reservoirs that were constructed over 20 years ago remain in Kissinger Gulch. The reservoirs are not being maintained and are growing over; thus, their visual impact is slight. The adjusted unit meets the naturalness criteria.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Black Mountain and Kissinger Gulch provide numerous opportunities to experience solitude. The high ridge tops provide vistas which can enhance a feeling of solitude. The numerous steep sided drainages and dense vegetation enable visitors to isolate themselves from others while in the unit. While the unit is barely over 5,000 acres, the combination of rugged terrain and dense vegetation give this unit ample screening potential resulting in outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Historically, big game hunting (primarily mule deer) has been the major recreational activity in the unit. Hunting and associated activities (camping, hiking, etc.) would continue to be the major primitive recreational opportunities in the unit. While activities such as hiking, wildlife observation, and scenic viewing could take place at other times of the year, the extent and variety of such activities is limited due to the semi-arid climate and small size of the unit. The small size would further constrain the freedom of movement within the unit. There are no supplemental values which enhance the recreational opportunities or make them unique in a regional context. While opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation do exist, they are not considered to be outstanding. They do, however, enhance the outstanding opportunities to experience solitude while in the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit's close proximity to Meeker and Rangely makes it accessible to population centers of northwest Colorado.

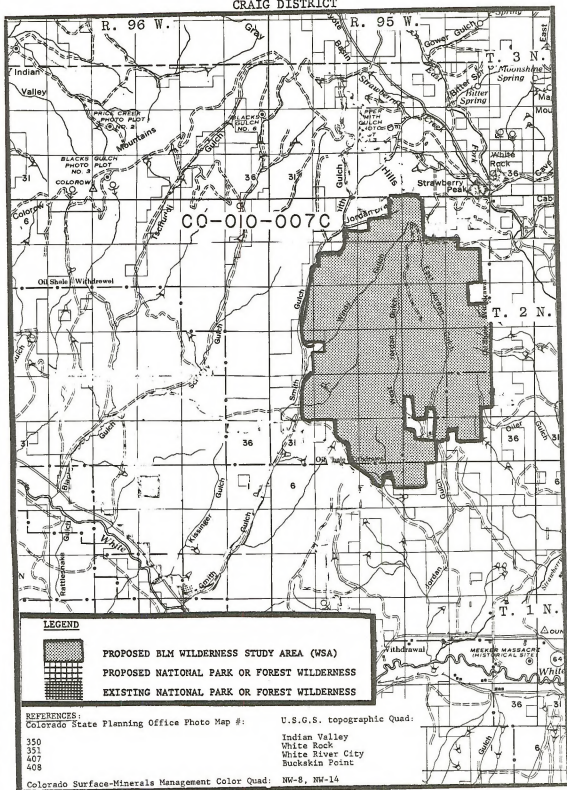
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Revegetation of the three reservoirs is occurring naturally. No other rehabilitation would be necessary.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

While the Black Mountain unit is a relatively small tract of undeveloped public land, its varied topography, dominated by Black Mountain, and dense vegetation provide outstanding opportunities to experience solitude in a natural setting. While opportunities for primitive recreation do exist, they are limited in extent and variety. However, the opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation together do offer visitors the potential for a wilderness experience. Overall, the unit meets the criteria required for further wilderness study.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

32 INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 12,274 acres
District Grain

Inventory No. CO-010-007C
Area Name Windy Gulch

GENERAL LOCATION: Northwest of Meeker (Rio Blanco County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Windy Gulch unit contains approximately 12,274 acres of contiguous public land. Minor boundary adjustments were made during initial inventory to eliminate small, narrow fingers of public land extending from the unit. No boundary adjustments were made during the final intensive inventory of this unit. The surrounding lands are private to the east, south, and north with public land to the west. This unit is separated from Unit 78 to the southwest by a pipeline corridor. The unit has grazing and oil and gas leases.

NATURALNESS:

The Windy Gulch unit offers a variety of topography and vegetation. The unit is characterized by rolling to moderately steep hills with numerous ridges and draws. Elevation ranges from 6,400' in the south to over 8,000' in the north. The high ridges provide vistas of the surrounding landscape including the White River Valley to the east. Dense vegetation in the form of pinyon-juniper, Douglas Fir, and scrub oak occurs on the ridges and slopes. The draws are more open with grasses and sagebrush the dominant vegetation. Minor imprints of man associated with grazing are scattered throughout the unit. These imprints, mostly trails and ways, are few in number and do not represent major surface or vegetative disturbances. They receive only occasional use, so their visual contrast is slight.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are present due to ample topographic and vegetative screening. The numerous draws provide visitors the opportunity to isolate themselves while in the unit. The high ridgetops provide numerous vistas which can enhance a feeling of solitude. The dense vegetation further promotes the opportunity to be alone while in the unit. The large size and blocked configuration provide ample room for individuals to disperse themselves within the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Historically, big game hunting (primarily mule deer) has been the major recreational activity in the unit. Hunting and associated activities (camping, hiking, etc.) would continue to be the major primitive recreational opportunity in the unit. While activities such as hiking, wildlife observation, and scenic viewing could take place at other times of the year, the extent and variety of such activities is limited due to the semi-arid climate. Lack of access to the unit would also restrict the area's availability for recreational purposes. There are no supplemental values which enhance the recreational opportunities or make them unique in a regional context. While opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation do exist, they are not considered outstanding. They do, however, enhance the outstanding opportunities to experience solitude while in the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

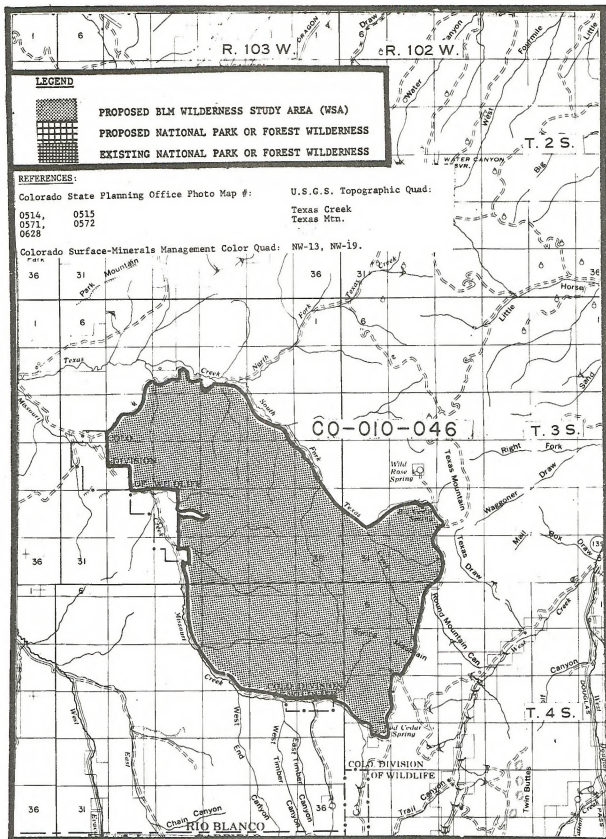
None identified.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The imprints of man are minor and would not require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A WSA:

The Windy Gulch unit is a large tract of undeveloped public land retaining much of its natural character. The varied topography and dense vegetation provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. The geographic remoteness further enhances the opportunity to be isolated while in the unit. While opportunities for primitive recreation do exist, they are limited in extent and variety. However, the opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation considered together do offer visitors the potential for a wilderness experience. Overall, the unit meets the criteria required for further wilderness study.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 17,740 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-46
Area Name Oil Spring Mountain
(Formerly Missouri Creek)

GENERAL LOCATION: South of Rangely (Rio Blanco County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Oil Spring Mountain unit contains approximately 17,740 acres of contiguous public land. One minor boundary adjustment excluding a gas well and access road was made during the initial inventory. The boundaries were adjusted during intensive inventory along the periphery to exclude an active gas well and recently constructed drill pads. The surrounding lands are predominately public lands with some Division of Wildlife lands along the southern and western boundaries. The entire unit is under oil and gas leases and grazing leases.

NATURALNESS:

The Oil Spring Mountain unit offers a variety of topographic relief and vegetation. The dominant feature is Oil Spring Mountain, and with the associated ridges and drainages of this landform, the terrain is diverse and dissected. The range in elevation provides for a variety of vegetation including piñon-juniper at the lower elevations and conifers and aspen at the higher elevations. Minor imprints of man can be found in the form of past oil and gas activities. Generally, these old drill holes and ways are returning to a natural state. The bulk of the unit remains in a natural condition.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the varied topography, with numerous drainages and ridges, the large ridge of Oil Spring Mountain, and the range in elevation (6,000 - 8,550 feet) ample topographic screening is present to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. Oil Spring Mountain provides superior views of the surrounding landscape, including the High Uintas in Utah and the Cathedral Bluffs and White River National Forest to the east. Vegetative screening also enhances the solitude potential within the unit. Piñon-juniper dominates the unit, especially the ridges. The large size and blocked configuration of the unit further enhance opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

While opportunities are present, the unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. Hunting is the primary recreational opportunity in the unit. Other activities such as hiking, camping, and wildlife observation could take place. The extent and variety of other activities is limited due to the rugged terrain and semi-arid climate. While the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not outstanding, they do enhance the outstanding opportunities for solitude present in the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Wild birds are found in the northern portions of the unit. The area is considered critical deer winter range and also provides habitat for elk, mountain lion, and black bear. The Missouri Creek unit is an "island" in an area which is receiving intensive oil and gas exploration and development. Its preservation in a natural state could serve as a representative example of an undisturbed portion of this region.

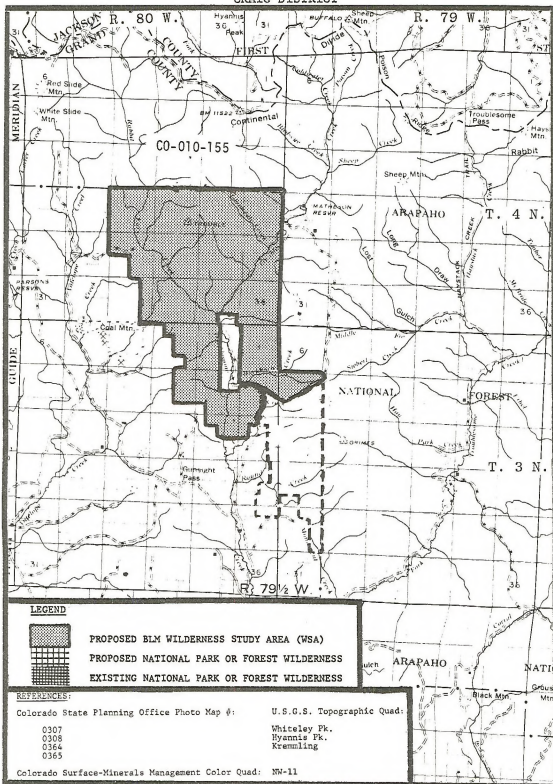
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Natural rehabilitation is occurring within the unit resulting in the imprints of man returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition. Natural process or hand labor would effectively rehabilitate the minor imprints of man.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Oil Spring Mountain unit is a large tract of undeveloped public land (17,740 acres) retaining most of its natural character. The northwest portion of the unit was the site of past oil and gas activity (1964), but these minor disturbances are rehabilitating through natural processes. The highly dissected topography and variety of vegetation as well as the prominence of Oil Spring Mountain enhance the opportunities for solitude. The unit exhibits several classic characteristics of wilderness including rugged terrain largely unaffected by man, aesthetically pleasing landscape, remoteness, and interesting wildlife. The unit meets the size, naturalness, and solitude criteria; therefore, it is recommended for further wilderness study.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

36 INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 9,595 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-155
Area Name Troublesome

GENERAL LOCATION: North of Kremmling (Grand County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Approximately 9,595 acres of contiguous public land are contained within this unit. A private inholding of approximately 425 acres is located in the interior of the unit, but was not inventoried for wilderness characteristics. Minor boundary adjustments were made during the initial inventory to exclude the access road to the private land and a narrow finger of public land on Coal Mountain. One boundary adjustment was made during the intensive inventory due to the presence of a maintained road in the Siebert Creek area. The surrounding lands are National Forest to the north and east and predominantly private to the south and west. A roadless area (#109) was identified by the Forest Service during the Rare II process but was not recommended for wilderness.

NATURALNESS:

The Troublesome Unit represents a rugged, mountainous terrain varying in elevation from 8,000 to 10,800 feet. The rock slide and rock outcropping areas contribute to this ruggedness. Most of the unit is forested with lodgepole pine, spruce, fir, and aspen. Vegetative variety is enhanced by the riparian habitat along the streams and the fung-lichen ecotone on the rock outcroppings. The area is generally natural in appearance and has retained its ecological naturalness as well. Minor imprints include an abandoned irrigation ditch and several stock watering ponds and other range improvements. Most of these range improvements are well screened by the dense forest vegetation, and are substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The Troublesome Unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude due to the following factors: topographic variation with numerous drainages and ridge tops, dense forest and riparian vegetation, adjacent U.S. Forest lands that are presently being managed as undeveloped, and geographic isolation from major outside influences.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present due to the following characteristics: variety of game and nongame wildlife, excellent opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, availability of stream and riparian habitat for fishing and wildlife viewing, and variety of geologic features for viewing and non-technical climbing. The 425 acre private inholding, however, serves as an obstacle to visitors who wish to travel unimpeded throughout the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

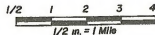
The Troublesome Unit is within two hours drive to the Denver metropolitan area and 1 to 1½ hours drive to numerous ski resorts in northern Colorado and Rocky Mountain National Park. U.S. Highway 40, which passes within 9 miles of the unit, serves as a major tourist route for northern Colorado. Another significant value is that this unit is adjacent to and provides physical access to over 80,000 acres of unique forest environment in the Arapahoe National Forest. This forestland contains a wealth of outstanding natural landscape. The recreational opportunities are similar to those of the Troublesome Unit. The present management scheme is to maintain the area in a primitive stage with little or no development.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

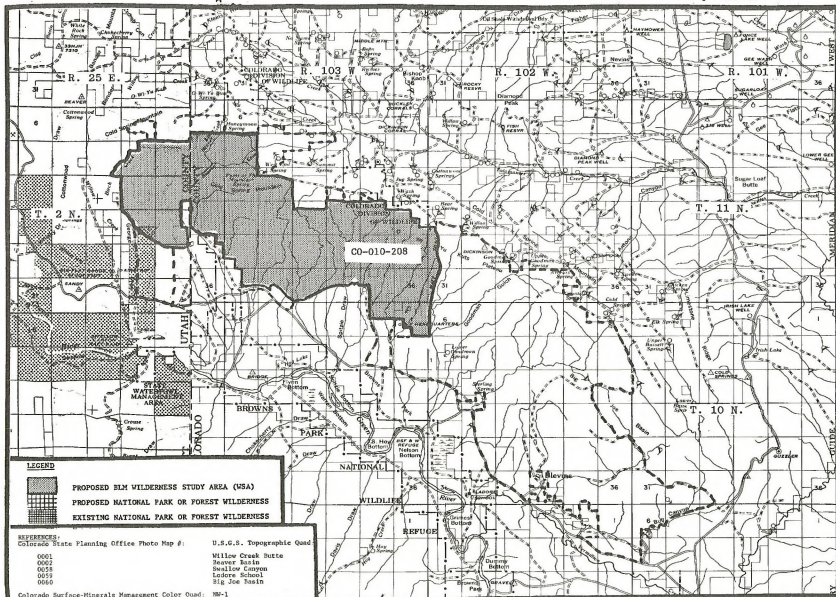
Natural rehabilitation is occurring within the unit resulting in the imprints of man returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition. Natural processes or hand labor would effectively rehabilitate the minor imprints of man.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The Troublesome inventory unit is a tract of undeveloped land (9,595 acres) retaining its primeval character and influence, and without significant permanent improvements. Outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are present due to dense forestation, a variety of wildlife, perennial streams, and varied topographic and geologic features. Overall, the unit meets the criteria of a Wilderness Study Area.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size CO - 14,484
UT - 3,200
Total - 17,684
District Craig/Vernal

Inventory No. CO-010-208/
UT-080-103

Area Name West Cold Springs

GENERAL LOCATION: Northwest Colorado along the Utah border (Moffat County, Colorado; Daggett County, Utah).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit was jointly inventoried by the Craig and Vernal Districts of BLM. The unit is 17,684 acres of public land administered by BLM. Four withdrawals for public water reserves totaling 180 acres are located in the unit. The unit has grazing leases and oil and gas leases. A boundary adjustment was made in the initial inventory to exclude roads and an irrigation ditch (1,567 acres). As a result of the intensive inventory, major boundary adjustments were made to exclude numerous grazing imprints in the eastern portion of the unit. If the boundary had been drawn around each imprint, the net effect would have been numerous fingers of land without wilderness characteristics penetrating the unit. The eastern boundary was relocated to the Matt Trail. The total acreage excluded is 27,339 acres.

NATURALNESS:

The Cold Springs unit is the rough and steep south facing slopes of Cold Springs Mountain with the top of the mountain only partially in the unit. The majority of the top of the mountain is State and Private land north of this unit. Many drainages exist with two major ones being Beaver Canyon along the west and Spitzler Draw along the east. The vegetation near water is diverse, containing willows and other riparian vegetation. The top of the mountain is flat and grassy with patches of aspen and piñon juniper. The majority of the unit, the south facing slopes, consists of sage and dense piñon juniper. The imprints found in this inventory and considered to be major are associated with grazing activities and are excluded. The major imprints deleted have little or no vegetative screening. The constant use, hand maintenance, wide distribution, and the cumulative number of imprints cause an unnatural effect. The eastern boundary has been adjusted to the Matt Trail, a foot trail running north-south, with small adjustments occurring along the southern and northern boundaries. Within Utah 1,531 acres are excluded due to imprints related to grazing activities. These imprints are also visually noticeable due to the lack of vegetation, constant use, and on-going maintenance. The remainder of the unit, 17,684 acres, is in a natural condition with only minor imprints of man.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the varied topography and dense vegetation, the adjusted Cold Springs unit does offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. A sense of vastness exists, caused by the size and high elevations. Intimacy can be found in the draws and canyons. The dense vegetation caused by the presence of water, offers screening from other's activities. The large size and blocked configuration also enhance the variety and extent of places to experience solitude. When taken cumulatively, the opportunities for solitude are outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Due to the diverse topography and vegetation, the presence of water, and the variety in wildlife, this unit has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The size and configuration also enhance the variety and extent of places to experience primitive recreation. The canyon, draws, and steep slopes of the mountain offer opportunities for backpacking, hiking, photography, scenic viewing, hunting, and fishing. In general, the number of activities available and quality of the experiences associated with them, provide this unit with outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Supplemental values that have been recorded are limited due to lack of inventories. The area is known to possess prehistoric and historic cultural values. During prehistoric times the area was first utilized by the Fremont culture and later by the Ute and Shoshoni tribes. No sites have yet been nominated for the National Register of Historic Places. The endangered peregrine falcon has been observed in this unit. Parthenium ligulatum, a threatened and endangered plant species, has been located within this unit.

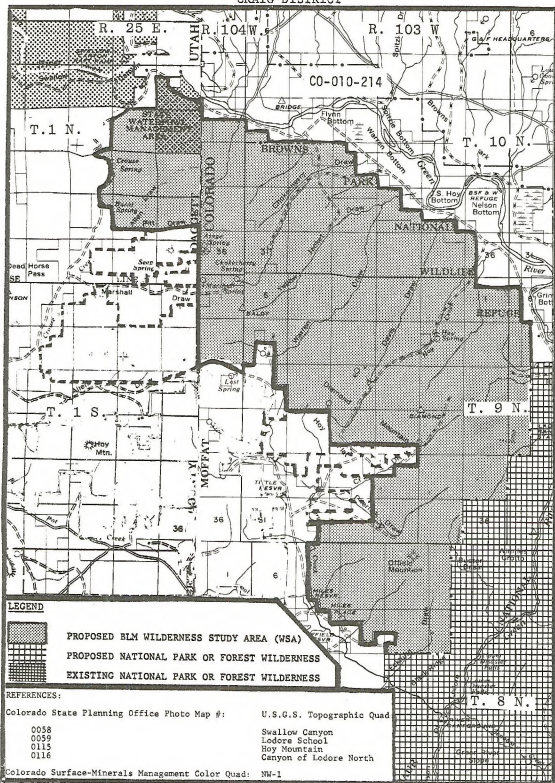
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints that are within the area recommended are minor in character and rehabilitation is not necessary.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The Cold Springs unit is a large tract of public land (17,684 acres), without any significant permanent improvements. The recommended area exhibits a high degree of naturalness with a diverse mixture of vegetation and a varied topographic relief. Because of the large size, rugged terrain, and vegetative screening, both outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation do exist. These factors qualify the adjusted unit for further wilderness study.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



40 INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size CO - 32,680
UT - 3,900
TOTAL - 36,580 acres
District Vernal/Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-214/
UT-080-113
Area Name Diamond Breaks
State Colorado/Utah

GENERAL LOCATION: Extreme Northwest Colorado and Eastern Utah (Hoffat - Daggett Counties).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit straddles the Utah-Colorado border, with 32,680 acres in Colorado and 3,900 acres in Utah. To the east is Dinosaur National Monument which has been proposed for wilderness and to the north is Brown's Park National Wildlife Refuge. To the south and west is a mixture of public and private lands. The intensive inventory was done jointly by the Craig and Vernal Districts of the BLM. The boundary was adjusted in the southern and western portions of the unit to exclude small, narrow pieces of public land extending from the bulk of the unit, where it was determined that opportunities for solitude were limited. Approximately 5,490 acres were deleted resulting in a more blocked configuration for the unit. The main use of the unit is grazing with some hunting also occurring. There are five public water reserves in the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The unit exhibits a high degree of naturalness with a diverse mixture of vegetation from sagebrush in the lower flats to aspen, fir and ponderosa pine in the higher elevations; topographic relief is varied with numerous mountaintops, ridges and steep walled draws. The imprints of man (ways, fences, and water developments) do not significantly detract from the naturalness of the unit because they are few in number and widely distributed throughout this large unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The large size of the unit with the diversity in terrain represented by numerous mountain meadows and peaks, valleys, steep sloped draws and a diverse vegetative cover that provides additional screening combine to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. Numerous draws, including Chokecherry, Yellow Jacket, Warren, Hoy Creek, and Davis provide numerous opportunities for solitude due to the steep slide slopes which provide isolation. Overall, this unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The large size of the unit with its diversity of terrain and vegetation offers outstanding opportunities for a variety of primitive or unconfined types of recreation. The abundant wildlife of the unit and the sharing of common borders with Dinosaur National Monument further enhance the opportunities for recreation and unconfined movement. Opportunities for backpacking, scenic viewing, hunting, and photography are outstanding in the unit. Because of the blocked configuration and large size, recreation opportunities are unconfined, allowing for freedom of movement.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Generally all minor imprints of man remaining in the unit can be returned to a substantially unnoticeable condition by either natural processes or by hand labor.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Several prehistoric sites and one historic site, which has since burned down, have been recorded in this area. This area was utilized in prehistoric times by the Fremont culture, and lithic scatter grannaries, and pictograph/petroglyph sites are known to exist in the area. The area was occupied later by the Ute and Shoshoni historic tribes, fur trappers and traders, and rancher-settlers. The peregrine falcon and bald eagle have been noted in the unit. The protected bighorn sheep ranges in the eastern portion of the unit.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREAS AS A WSA:

The Diamond Breaks inventory unit is a large tract of undeveloped land (36,580 acres) retaining its primeval character and influence, and without significant permanent improvements. The unit exhibits a high degree of naturalness with a diverse mixture of vegetation and a varied topographic relief. Because of the large size, rugged terrain, dense vegetation, abundant wildlife, and numerous vantage points, the unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The unit meets the criteria for further wilderness study.

CRAIG DISTRICT



Colorado State Planning Office Photo map 6:

U.S.G.S. Topographic Quad:

0177
0178
0236

Love Mountain
Elk Springs

Colorado Surface-Minerals Management Color Quad: NW-7, NW-8

2

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY

Under Section 603

Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 17,480
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-230
Area Name Cross Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: Northwest Colorado (Hoffat County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit contains 17,480 acres of public land administered by BLM. There are three withdrawals in this unit. One of these is a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission powersite withdrawal. The Colorado Water Conservation District has proposed a dam at the mouth of Cross Mountain Canyon as a part of its Juniper/Cross Mountain project. The eastern boundary was adjusted in the initial inventory along roads that were inadvertently left in the unit. No boundary adjustments have been made as a result of the intensive inventory. The unit is leased for grazing. Surrounding lands are a mixture of public and private lands. The final acreage of 17,480 acres differs from the initial inventory figure of 17,060 acres because the final acreage was computed with an electronic planimeter.

NATURALNESS:

This area is in a natural condition with only minor imprints of man present. Cross Mountain Canyon is the major attraction of this unit with the Yampa River flowing through the canyon. Cross Mountain itself is a long north-south ridge running the length of the unit. The vegetation is pinyon-juniper and sagebrush in the valleys surrounding the canyon with aspen, grasses, and mountain shrub interspersed throughout the canyon. The imprints are few and mostly associated with grazing activities. They include three ways, an abandoned sheep camp, and an abandoned mine. These imprints do not represent major surface or vegetative disturbances; therefore, their visual contrast is slight.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the varied and rugged topographical features, numerous vantage points, varied vegetation, and location, the Cross Mountain unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. The highly dissected relief of the unit, as evidenced by the canyon and surrounding valleys, offers opportunities for isolation. Along the Yampa River, the curves and configuration of the canyon enhance isolation and a feeling of being alone. On top of Cross Mountain itself numerous vistas exist which enhance a feeling of solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Cross Mountain Canyon is the core of the wilderness values in this unit. Floating of the Yampa River through the Canyon is limited and considered dangerous because of the numerous boulders in the river. At times other than high water, it is possible to hike through the Canyon which is approximately three miles in length. The Canyon itself provides interesting sightseeing opportunities due to its geology, the Yampa River, and reported cultural values. The Yampa River also offers fishing opportunities. Cross Mountain offers numerous vistas of the surrounding landscape including Douglas Mountain and Dinosaur National Monument to the west. Mountain sheep also exist on the mountain providing opportunities for wildlife viewing. Because of the variety and extent, the primitive and recreational opportunities of this unit are considered to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Cross Mountain is a critical habitat for *Penstemon yampaensis* which is a threatened and endangered plant species. Also, this area is a unique and unusual habitat for the taxon, and is of scientific, geological, and evolutionary significance. Cross Mountain is a faulted anticline, asymmetrical, shaped by the tilt and upward fold on the south. There exists a great opportunity to learn about geologic origin from these features. The rock outcrops represent a span of about a billion years of geological history while the fossil bearing rocks represent a period of over 500 million years of time. Several formations have been identified; the Weber Formation and colorful Triassic, Moenlopi, Chinle, and Shinarump can also be seen. Several archaeological sites have been identified including many chips and other artifacts. Eight caves have been identified, also, but more research is needed. Threatened or endangered animals do exist within this unit. The golden eagle has been sighted here with two nesting areas noted. The squawfish and humpback chub have been identified in the Yampa River within the area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

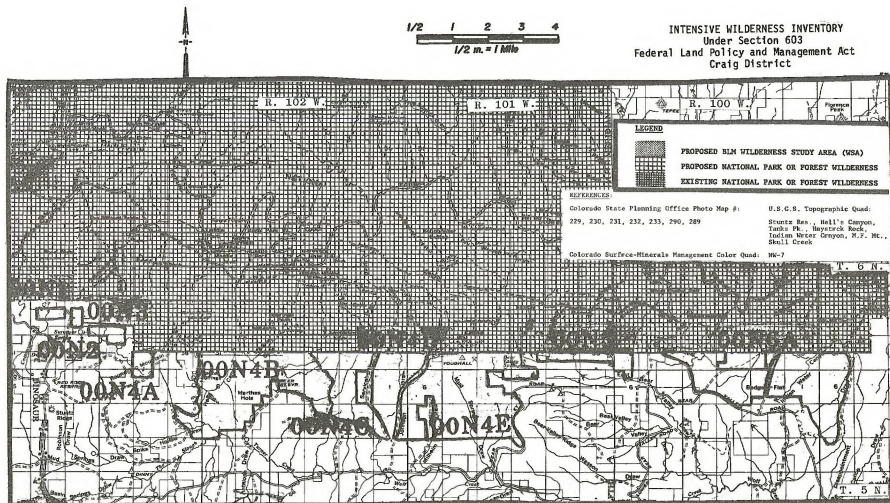
All imprints are determined to have a minimal impact and are rehabilitating naturally.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Cross Mountain inventory unit is a large tract of undeveloped land (17,480 acres) retaining much of its primeval character and influence, and without significant permanent improvements. Due to the steep canyon walls, high elevations of the mountain itself, diversity of vegetation and varied topography, outstanding opportunities for solitude are present. The Canyon, the Yampa River, the mountain and the variety of wildlife all contribute to outstanding opportunities for hiking, hunting, fishing, scenic viewing, and wildlife observation. Overall, this unit meets the criteria for further wilderness study.

CRAIG DISTRICT

AREAS NOT RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS



UNIT IDENTIFICATION

Size District	16,140 (10 units) <u>Craig</u>	Inventory Nos.	CO-010-00N1-00N6a
		Unit Names	Dinosaur Adjacent Units (Southern Boundary)
00N1 =	10 acres	00N4c =	1,600 acres
00N2 =	80 acres	00N4d =	1,200 acres
00N3 =	320 acres	00N4e =	4,500 acres
00N4a =	240 acres	00N5 =	560 acres
00N4b =	4,100 acres	00N6a =	3,800 acres

GENERAL LOCATION: North of U.S. 40 along the southern boundary of Dinosaur National Monument (Moffat County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Individually, the units are less than 5,000 acres, but they are contiguous to Dinosaur National Monument (DNM), which has been proposed for wilderness designation by the National Park Service. All units are public land administered by BLM. A private holding of approximately 440 acres is located in Unit N6a, but was not inventoried for wilderness characteristics. Minor boundary changes were made in initial inventory to exclude a chaining and due to a road/way reclassification. No boundary adjustments were made during intensive inventory. The units are under numerous grazing and oil and gas leases.

NATURALNESS:

The multiple units are located adjacent to the DNM southern boundary. The boundary is located on the south side of a large ridge, running east and west. This gives the DNM a built-in natural buffer. The DNM boundary location is a natural break and the adjacent units are not topographical or ecological continuations of the landforms found within the Monument. An exception is Hells Canyon, N4b, which is the only break in the ridge. Generally, the units are located along steep to rolling hills (elevations 7,000 to 8,000 feet). Vegetation consists primarily of sagebrush, mountain-brush and grass. Occasional pockets of broadleaf trees can be found at the higher elevations and on the northern slopes. Some pinyon-juniper is also found along ridges in the units. The units generally appear to be natural. Minor activities of man, mostly associated with grazing (fences, reservoirs, stock tanks, and ways), are present in the units. They do not represent major surface or vegetative disturbances; therefore, they are not substantially noticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Primarily due to the smallness of the units, lack of varied topography (basically rolling hills), lack of vegetative screening (basically sage and grass), and the natural break from the Monument, the ten units adjacent to the southern boundary of DNM do not provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Lack of topographic and vegetative diversity, confined movement due to size and fences, and minimal amount of opportunities available in these units do not provide for an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The presence of Dinosaur National Monument to the north does not enhance the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation due to the topographic break which in effect separates these units from the recreational opportunities present in the monument.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Two species of threatened or endangered plants are known to occur in the area and one species is reported to occur. Peregrine falcons are also known to occur.

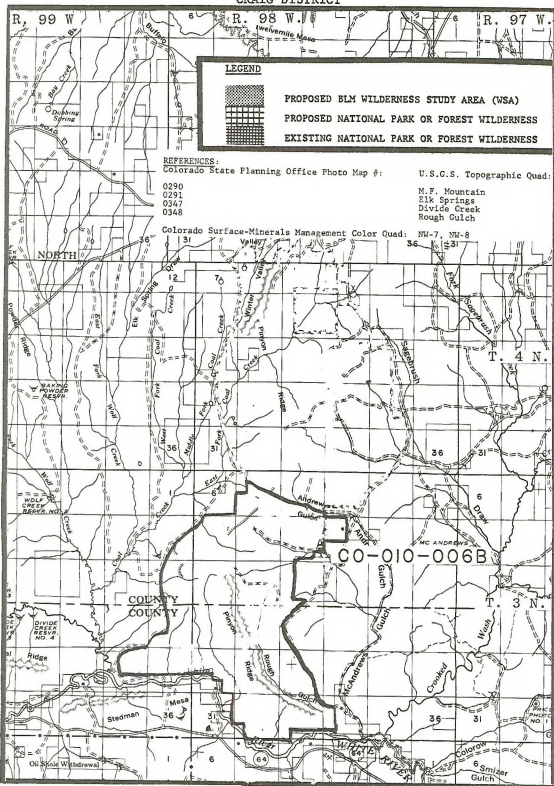
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Generally, all minor imprints of man can be returned to a substantially unnoticeable condition by either natural processes or by hand labor. All ways are capable of rehabilitating naturally.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AREAS AS A W.S.A.:

The units are small, less than 5,000 acres individually; however, they are adjacent to proposed wilderness in Dinosaur National Monument. The units are not an ecological or topographic continuation of Dinosaur National Monument, due to the natural break or barrier forming the southern boundary of DNM. The wilderness values and potential therefore are not enhanced by the presence of the Monument. The small acreage and predominately sagebrush vegetation do not provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude. Limited opportunities for solitude may be present with the units as a result of the topography, but the rolling hills and few canyons do not present outstanding opportunities for solitude. The lack of diversity of vegetation and topography limits recreation opportunities. Unconfined recreation and movement would be limited due to the small acreage and numerous fences. Private land in the area would further restrict movement and access. Wildlife, especially deer, do provide for opportunities for primitive hunting. Other activities such as backpacking, horseback riding and photography are potential opportunities within the unit. These units are not continuations of the outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined type of recreation found in the adjoining DNM.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 m. = 1 Mile

48 INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,353 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-0068
Area Name Pinyon Ridge

General Location: 50 miles west of Craig in between Highways 40 and 64 (Moffat - Rio Blanco Counties).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Pinyon Ridge unit contains approximately 8,353 acres of contiguous public land. Major boundary adjustments were made in initial inventory to exclude significant evidence of man's activities related to grazing and oil and gas activity. The boundary was adjusted during intensive inventory to exclude a pipeline. The surrounding lands are predominately public land with private land to the south along the White River and scattered private and State lands around the remainder of the unit. The unit is under grazing and oil and gas leases.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is characterized by rolling to occasionally steep hills. The dominant feature is Pinyon Ridge which runs the length of the unit. The western side of Pinyon Ridge is a steep and abrupt slope. Vegetation is primarily pinyon-juniper. Imprints of man in the form of past and present oil and gas and grazing activity can be found throughout the unit. The cumulative effect of these imprints (ways, reservoirs, fences, seismic trail) make it difficult to escape evidence of man's activities. Because these imprints are widely distributed throughout the unit, man's work is substantially noticeable. The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria required for further wilderness study.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. The rugged terrain of Pinyon Ridge in effect divides the unit into two relatively small areas. The steep topography of the western face of Pinyon Ridge, the numerous ways throughout the unit, and the relatively small area available to experience solitude in the unit would increase the opportunities for encountering others while in the unit. These factors taken cumulatively would restrict the opportunities for being alone or remote from others.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. Hunting is the primary recreational opportunity in the unit due to the wildlife populations in the region. When considered in a regional context, the hunting opportunities are not unique or outstanding. The steep western face of Pinyon Ridge and the numerous ways throughout the unit would confine movement within the unit. The steep topography would also limit the area available for recreational activities. The semi-arid climate would further restrict the variety and extent of recreational activities, because of the limited range of recreational activities, and the confining topography, the unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

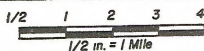
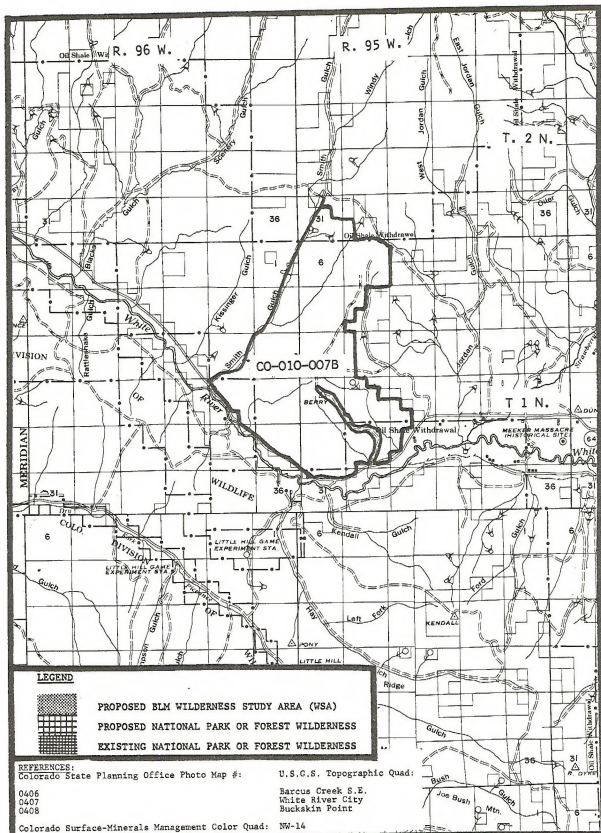
Pinyon Ridge is a dominant geologic feature in the area. The ridge is approximately 15 miles in length running north to south. About half of the Ridge is located within the unit. The steep western face of the Ridge provides a stark contrast to the low lying basin area to the west. A large prairie dog community is found in the western portion of the unit at the foot of Pinyon Ridge.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

To rehabilitate the numerous ways and seismic trail would require a major effort throughout the entire unit.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Pinyon Ridge unit is a relatively small tract of Public Land (8,353 acres). The unit shows substantial evidence of past and present oil and gas and grazing activity. The steep topography and numerous ways enhance the opportunities for encountering others and restrict the range of recreational activities and freedom of movement. The unit is determined not to meet the naturalness criteria and not to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation; therefore, it is not recommended for further study.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,679 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-007B
Area Name Berry Point

GENERAL LOCATION: Seven miles west of Meeker, north of Highway 64 (Rio Blanco County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Berry Point unit contains approximately 8,679 acres of contiguous public land. No boundary adjustments were made during initial inventory. The boundary was adjusted during intensive inventory to exclude a maintained road to Berry Point. The surrounding lands are private to the east and south with public and private land to the north. This unit is separated from Unit 7A to the west by a system of ways in Smith Gulch and from Unit 7C to the north by a pipeline corridor. The unit has one grazing lease and numerous oil and gas leases.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is characterized by rolling to moderately steep hills with numerous ridges and draws. The elevation in the unit ranges from 7,200' in the north to 6,000' in the south. The southern boundary is north of the White River valley. The ridges are high enough to provide good vistas of the upper White River valley to the east and Black Mountain to the west. Past oil and gas exploration activities have left a network of ways throughout the unit. These ways were originally constructed with heavy equipment resulting in removal of the topsoil which has slowed natural revegetation. Heavy use by vehicles during hunting season further impedes the revegetation. Several of the ways follow ridge tops and have been cut through the piñon-juniper leaving linear visual contrasts through much of the unit. Minor imprints related to grazing activities also occur in the unit. Because of the distribution of these imprints throughout the unit, evidence of man's activities is substantially noticeable. The unit, therefore, does not meet the naturalness criteria required for further wilderness study.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The rolling to steep topography does provide opportunities for solitude. The numerous draws and dense piñon-juniper cover would enable visitors to isolate themselves from others. The ridge tops provide numerous vistas, which can enhance a feeling of solitude. The opportunities for experiencing solitude are compromised, however, by the numerous imprints of man's activities. It would be difficult to experience solitude in a natural setting, especially along the ridge tops. The numerous ways would also tend to concentrate visitors along these routes, thus increasing the chances for encountering others while in the unit. While opportunities for solitude do exist in this unit, they are not considered outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

While primitive recreation opportunities are present, they are not considered to be outstanding. Hunting and related activities are the primary recreational opportunities in the unit. The big game hunting is considered to be very good. Other activities such as hiking, camping, wildlife observation and scenic viewing could take place. The extent of these activities is somewhat limited due to the semi-arid climate and relatively small size of the unit. The numerous ways would tend to serve as primary travel routes, thus restricting the freedom of movement. The relatively small size of the unit would further limit the area available for unconfined movement. There are no supplemental values which enhance the recreational opportunities. When considered in a regional context, the opportunities are not unique or outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit's close proximity to Meeker makes it accessible to a population center in Northwest Colorado.

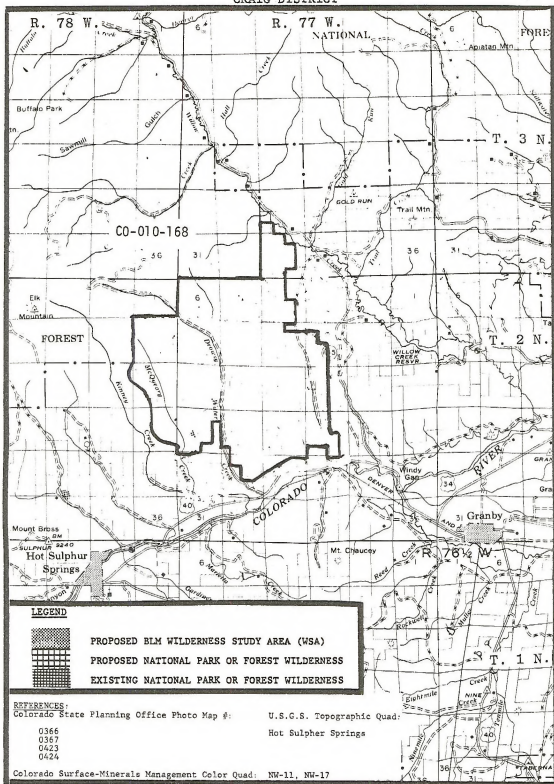
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Rehabilitation of the numerous ways would require a major effort. The relatively continuous use of these ways by hunters has slowed any natural revegetation.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Berry Point unit shows substantial evidence of man's activities which affects the unit's naturalness in a wilderness context. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are present but limited in variety and extent. When these opportunities are considered for the unit itself or in a regional context, they cannot be considered outstanding. The unit, therefore, does not qualify for further wilderness study.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 9,870 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-168
Area Name Drowsy Water

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast of Hot Sulphur Springs (Grand County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit includes 9,870 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Minor boundary adjustments were made during the initial inventory to exclude clear-cut areas and narrow fingers of public land. No boundary adjustments were made during intensive inventory. Surrounding lands are Arapahoe National Forest to the north, SLW to the west, and a mixture of public and private lands on the south and east. The Forest Service did not identify a roadless area adjacent to this unit during the Rare II process.

NATURALNESS:

The Drowsy Water Unit exhibits a mesa topography with flat tops, steep side slopes and narrow valleys. The perennial streams of Drowsy Water and Smith Creeks flow north to south through the unit. Three different vegetative types include lodgepole pine, sagebrush and aspen stands. The most significant imprints of man are 14 miles of ways that dissect the unit and 2 miles of an abandoned irrigation ditch. The ways were graded by heavy equipment with numerous cuts and fills all in evidence on the landscape. The presence of three ways and an irrigation ditch represent significant evidence of man's imprint on the naturalness of this unit. The rehabilitation potential is low due to the large volume of topsoil and parent material that has been displaced.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Some opportunities for solitude can be found in the forest vegetative cover in the northern half of the unit and during the winter when access to the unit is restricted to cross-country skis and snowshoes. These opportunities are limited due to the cumulative impacts of existing ways, open sageland, steep mesa sides and adjacent clear-cut units. The unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Drowsy Water Unit offers limited opportunities for hiking and backpacking due to the availability of deer, elk, and other wildlife species, and presence of scenic vistas. However, the 14 miles of ways would be conducive to a "confined" experience. When considered with the surrounding areas in the Middle Park region, the recreational opportunities in this unit are not unique or outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

This unit is within two hours drive of Denver, Colorado and one-half hour drive of Rocky Mountain National Park. Other than this, the Drowsy Water Unit does not contain any significant supplemental values that would add to its ability to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area.

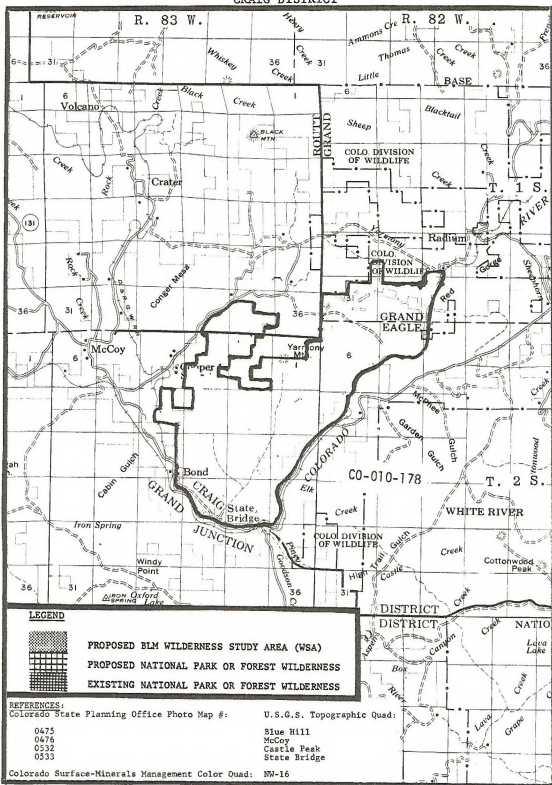
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The 14 miles of ways have a significant impact on the area's potential for rehabilitating naturally. The ways were constructed with heavy machinery approximately 10 to 15 years ago with numerous cuts and fills located throughout the system. All other imprints of man in the unit can be returned to a substantially unnoticeable condition by natural processes or by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AREA AS W.S.A.:

The presence of 14 miles of ways significantly detract from the unit's naturalness. The rehabilitation potential is low due to the large volume of topsoil and parent material that has been displaced. The opportunities for solitude are limited due to the cumulative impacts of existing ways, open sageland and steep mesa sides. There are some opportunities for day hiking, hunting, and other dispersed recreational opportunities. However, these are not considered as outstanding in degree and variety. The unit meets only the size criteria; therefore, it does not qualify for further study.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

54

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,590 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-178
Area Name Yarmony Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: North of State Bridge (Grand-Eagle-Routt Counties).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit includes 8,590 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. A minor boundary adjustment was made in initial inventory to exclude a railroad tract. No boundary adjustments were made during intensive inventory. Several mining claims occur throughout the unit. Surrounding lands are predominately BLM with scattered private and State lands. The unit has three grazing leases and several oil and gas leases.

NATURALNESS:

This unit may be characterized as having a mesa-like topography with numerous small gulches radiating from the mesa tops. Due to the private land patterns to the north, the unit contains only portions of the mesa tops which form Yarmony Mountain. One side of Yarmony Canyon occurs in the unit with an elevation differential of 1700 feet in a one-half mile horizontal distance. Pinyon-juniper, sagebrush and grasses dominate the landscape. The mesa tops are very open with minimal vegetative screening. Twelve miles of ways and numerous range improvements (cumulative impact considered) detract significantly from the apparent naturalness of the Yarmony Mountain unit. These ways were originally constructed with heavy machinery and represent a significant visual contrast on the landscape. Consequently, this unit does not meet the naturalness criteria required for further wilderness study.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The Yarmony Unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude due to the following factors: the restrictive nature of the topography, the lack of vegetation on the mesa tops, and the configuration in the north resulting from private land ownership. The steep slopes would tend to concentrate visitors on the mesa tops where the lack of vegetation would increase the chances of encountering others or being aware of the presence of others. The private land pattern in the north would further tend to concentrate visitors on the southern mesa top, thus reducing the opportunities to be isolated from others. While some opportunities for solitude may exist in the small drainages and pinyon-juniper stands, overall the unit does not provide outstanding opportunities to experience solitude in a wilderness setting.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The primitive recreational opportunities of the Yarmony Mountain area are limited due to the confining nature of the topography and configuration caused by private land in the northern portion. The unit does offer opportunities for wildlife observation, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding and general sightseeing. These activities would be limited in variety and extent due to the steep sloped topography and the intruding private lands in the north. Most recreational activity would be confined to a relatively small area on the southern mesa top. Overall, the unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Yarmony Mountain Unit does not contain any significant supplemental values that would add to its ability to qualify as a wilderness study area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The 12 miles of ways have a significant impact on the area's potential for rehabilitating naturally. Rehabilitation would require substantial work by heavy equipment to replace the parent material and topsoil and to reseed the ways. Other imprints such as fences and spring improvements can be returned to a substantially unnoticeable condition by natural process or by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The impacts on the unit's naturalness as well as the limited and confined nature of the unit's opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation do not qualify this area for further study. There are 12 miles of ways and numerous range improvements (cumulative impact considered) that detract significantly from the apparent naturalness of the Yarmony Mountain Unit. The potential for solitude is limited due to the mesa topography, linear configuration and private land intrusions. Recreation opportunities are limited in degree and variety to such experiences as day hiking and general sightseeing. Freedom of movement is constrained by the steep mesa sides and linear configuration.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,368 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-208E
Area Name Limestone

GENERAL LOCATION: Extreme northwest Colorado (Moffat County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit contains approximately 8,368 acres of public land administered by BLM. The unit has grazing and oil and gas leases. A boundary adjustment was made during initial inventory to exclude 3,840 acres that contained significant imprints of man related to grazing. As a result of the intensive inventory, the boundary was adjusted to exclude an additional 1,183 acres found to also contain significant imprints (cumulative impact considered) related to grazing. The lands surrounding this unit are predominately public lands. Unit 208 is to the west with Unit 210 separated by the county road in Irish Canyon to the east.

NATURALNESS:

This unit contains the east end of Cold Springs Mountain and portions of Big and Little Joe Basins. Limestone Ridge, which runs in a north-south direction for approximately three miles in the unit, is the dominant landform. Elevations along the ridge reach 8,636 feet. The steep eastern slopes of Limestone Ridge form the western slopes of Irish Canyon. In the central portion of the unit are the rugged southern slopes of Cold Springs Mountain. The western portion of the unit opens into Big and Little Joe Basins. Limestone Ridge and the Basins are open areas, while the central portion is densely vegetated with piñon-juniper. After boundary adjustments, the imprints of man remaining in the unit include a reservoir, abandoned fencelines, and four ways. Because these imprints do not represent major surface or vegetative disturbances and are few in number, the evidence of man's activities is substantially unnoticeable. The adjusted unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Some opportunities for solitude do exist but are limited in extent. The rugged topography of the slopes of Cold Springs Mountain would tend to concentrate users onto a linear area along Limestone Ridge and the portions of Big and Little Joe Basins in the unit. These relatively small areas are very open, thus increasing the chance of encountering others or being aware of the presence of others. The dense piñon-juniper and rugged topography in the center portion of the unit would provide screening and some opportunities to become isolated. This area encompasses approximately one-third of the unit, resulting in a relatively small area in which to experience a feeling of solitude. The opportunities for solitude are not considered to be outstanding in the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Historically, big game hunting (primarily mule deer) has been the major recreational activity in the unit. Hunting and associated activities (camping, hiking, etc.) would continue to be the major primitive recreational opportunity in the unit. While activities such as hiking, wildlife observation, and scenic viewing could take place at other times of the year, the extent and variety of such activities is limited due to the semi-arid climate and relatively small size of the unit. The rugged topography of the center portion would constrain the freedom of movement between Limestone Ridge and the Basins. There are no supplemental values which enhance the recreational opportunities or make them unique in a regional context. While opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation do exist, they are not considered to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The threatened and endangered Peregrine Falcon uses this unit for a hunting territory.

Threatened and endangered plant species (*Parthenium ligulatum* and *Penstemon yampaensis*) are reported to occur within the area. The Penstemon is endemic from Maybell to Elk Springs, therefore, the location at the mouth of Irish Canyon and south of Vermillion Creek bridge is of scientific and evolutionary significance.

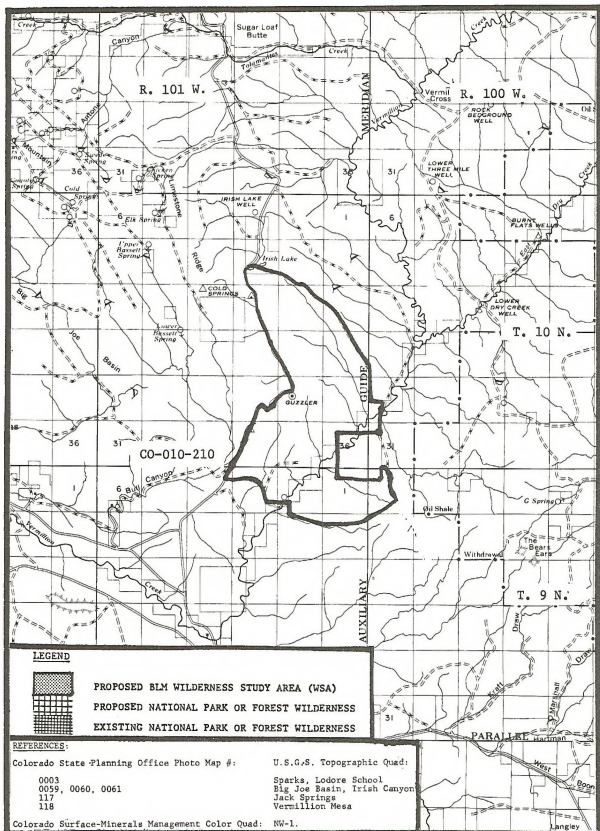
The entire unit is of geologic significance. It covers 12 of 22 geologic formations found in northwest Colorado. This is unusual due to the extensive faulting resting nearly vertical. These sediments represent over 600 million years of the earth's history and provide a valuable geologic resource that should be protected.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints are minor in character and rehabilitation is not necessary.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

While the Limestone unit is a medium sized tract of undeveloped public land, the opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are not considered to be outstanding. The opportunities to become isolated are limited to the relatively small rugged central portion of the unit. Recreational opportunities center around hunting and associated activities. Freedom of movement between Limestone Ridge and the Basins is confined by the rugged topography and dense vegetation in the center of the unit. While opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are present, they are limited in variety and extent; therefore, the unit is not recommended for further study.



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 6,600 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-210
Area Name Irish Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Northwest Colorado (Moffat County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Irish Canyon Unit contains approximately 6,600 acres of public land administered by BLM. A state section is located along the eastern boundary and was excluded from the unit. The southern boundary was adjusted in the initial inventory due to the misplacement of a road. No boundary adjustments were made in the intensive inventory. The primary use of this unit is winter grazing with a non-active FERC Powersite withdrawal along Vermillion Creek. This unit is surrounded by public land with unit CO-010-208 located to the west and unit CO-010-2100 to the south. These three units are separated by roads.

NATURALNESS:

This unit consists of the narrow north-south ridge which forms the steep eastern side of Irish Canyon. The ridge top reaches elevations of 7,425 feet. The northeastern portion of the unit opens into more rolling terrain and contains two side drainages of Vermillion Creek. The canyon of Vermillion Creek enters the unit in the southeastern portion and runs for approximately two miles through the unit. A state section outside the unit encompasses much of the very rugged part of Vermillion Canyon. The vegetation is dense pinyon-juniper along the ridge with sagebrush and grasses in the draws. The presence of water in Vermillion Creek provides for riparian vegetation. The imprints of man are related to grazing and include stock watering facilities and ways. They are not substantially noticeable due to limited use and vegetative and topographic screening. The bulk of the unit is in a natural condition.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude are present in this unit but limited in extent. A visitor could become truly isolated while in Vermillion Canyon, but the canyon comprises only a very small part of the unit. Some opportunities exist along the ridge where the pinyon-juniper is dense, but they are confined to a relatively small linear area. The remainder of the unit is open with minimal screening, thus increasing the chance of encountering others or being aware of the presence of others. Taken cumulatively, the opportunities to experience solitude are not considered to be outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Historically, big game hunting (primarily mule deer) and viewing of cultural resources have been the major recreational activities in the unit. Hunting and associated activities (camping, hiking, etc.) would continue to be the major primitive recreational activities in the unit. While activities such as hiking and scenic viewing could take place at other times of the year, the extent and variety of such activities is limited due to the semi-arid climate and small size of the unit. The small size would further constrain the freedom of movement within the unit. While opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation do exist, they are not considered to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The entire unit is of geologic significance. It covers twelve of the geologic formations found in northwest Colorado. This is unusual due to the extensive faulting which rests nearly vertical. These sediments represent over 600 million years of the earth's history and provide valuable geologic information. A petroglyph site has been recorded within this unit and BLM has marked this with an interpretive sign and an improved foot trail leading to the site. Prehistoric use of this area has been demonstrated by these petroglyphs of the Fremont culture and Ute Indians. Chukar partridge occur within this unit. These birds are not native but have been introduced by the Colorado Division of Wildlife. The population numbers about 100 birds and appears to be doing well. They are one of only two populations occurring in Moffat County. A threatened and endangered plant, *Penstemon Yampaensis*, has been reported to occur at the mouth of Irish Canyon within this unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The minor imprints are minimal within this unit, and rehabilitation is not necessary.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A U.S.A.:

The Irish Canyon Unit is a relatively small tract of undeveloped public land. The linear nature of the unit combined with the topographic limitations, restrict the opportunities to become isolated and constrain the primitive recreational opportunities. While opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation do exist, they are not outstanding. Thus, the unit is not recommended for further study.

REFERENCES:

Colorado State Planning Office Photo Map #:

0003
0059, 0060, 0061
117
118

U.S.G.S. Topographic Quad:

Sparks, Lodore School
Big Joe Basin, Irish Canyon
Jack Springs
Vermillion Mesa

Colorado Surface-Minerals Management Color Quad: NW-1.

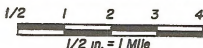
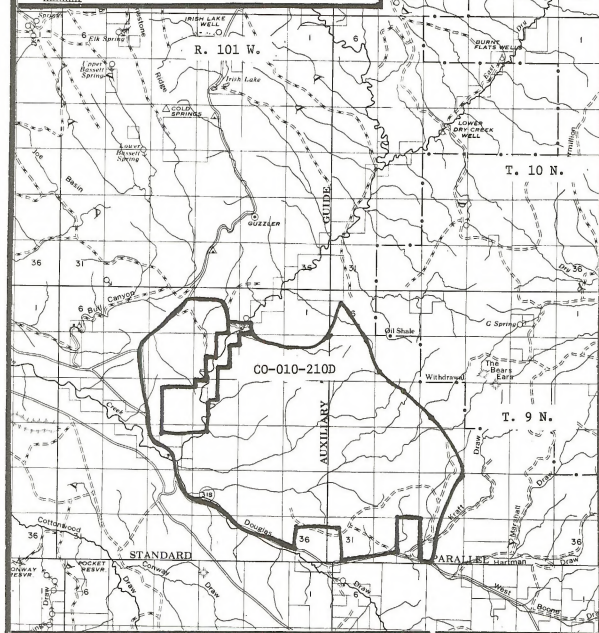
LEGEND



PROPOSED BLM WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA)

PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK OR FOREST WILDERNESS

EXISTING NATIONAL PARK OR FOREST WILDERNESS



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY

Under Section 603

Federal Land Policy and Management Act

Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 16,960 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. CO-010-210d
Area Name Douglas Draw

GENERAL LOCATION: Northwest Colorado (Moffat County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit contains 16,960 acres of public land administered by BLM. The northern boundary was adjusted in the initial inventory to relocate the road separating Units 210 and 210d. No further boundary adjustments were made as a result of the intensive inventory. The unit has grazing and oil and gas leases. The surrounding lands are a mixture of public, private, and State lands. In the western portion of the unit, State and private lands along Vermillion Creek penetrate the unit for approximately two miles. These lands are outside the unit and were not inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

NATURALNESS:

The Douglas Draw unit consists primarily of rolling hills and valleys, generally flat and semi-arid terrain with little or no diversity in the vegetation. The majority of the unit is sandy with sagebrush and scattered sections of piñon-juniper. The imprints of man are substantially noticeable due to the lack of vegetative screening. The imprints are associated with the private and state lands and grazing activities. Due to the number of imprints and the lack of varied terrain and lack of vegetative growth, this unit has noticeable evidence of man's activities and is not considered to be in a natural condition.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the lack of significant topographic and vegetative screening, this unit provides minimal opportunities to become isolated from others. The openness of the unit would increase the chances of encountering others or being aware of the presence of others in the unit. There are no outstanding vistas which can enhance a feeling of solitude. While some opportunities for solitude do exist, they are not considered to be outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not present within this unit, due to a combination of factors. The roads and ways allow for motorized use while the lack of variety in topography does not enhance opportunities for scenic viewing, backpacking or hiking. The irregular configuration due to the private and state land creates a confined type of recreation. The semi-arid climate and lack of water is a negative factor when considering the possibilities for remaining in the unit over an extended period of time. The wildlife present is minimal because of the vegetation and lack of water. Hunting is the main form of recreation, but is primarily done with motorized vehicles and not a primitive type of recreation. The topography, vegetation, and configuration of the unit limit the area available for primitive and unconfined recreation activities; therefore, the unit does not have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Oxytropis obnapiformis and *Eriogonum viridulum* occur at the confluence of Douglas Draw and Vermillion Creek. These are a threatened and endangered plant species. Chukar partridge occur within this unit. These birds are not native but have been introduced by the Colorado Division of Wildlife. The population numbers about 100 birds and appears to be doing well. They are one of only two populations occurring in Moffat County.

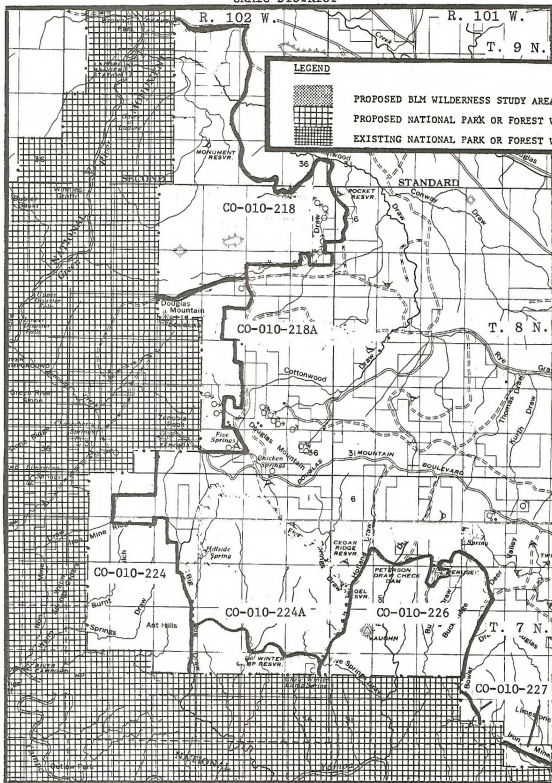
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The possibility for rehabilitation within this unit is very limited. The ways have been biased and receive moderate use by ranchers and hunters. The semi-arid climate, sandy soil and lack of vegetation would make rehabilitation very difficult.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A WSA:

While the Douglas Draw unit is a relatively large tract of public land, the imprints of man are substantially noticeable due to lack of topographic and vegetative screening. This also affects the opportunities for solitude. The freedom of movement within the unit is compromised by the private and state lands penetrating the unit along Vermillion Creek. Overall, the opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are limited in variety and extent. Taken cumulatively, the unit does not have the characteristics required for further wilderness study.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado
CRAIG DISTRICT



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 mile

Not Recommended as a W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-010-218, 218a, 224,
224a, 226, 227, 228,
229d, 271/N6b

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 39,680 acres, Multiple Units, see below Inventory No. CO-010-218, 218a, 224, 224a, 226, 227, 228, 229d, 271/N6b

District Craig Area Name Dinosaur Adjacent Units

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Northern and Southeastern boundary of Olinasaur National Monument (Moffat County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

218	- 8,230 acres	227	- 240 acres
218a	- 1,900 acres	228	- 6,200 acres
224	- 5,210 acres	229d	- 6,000 acres
224a	- 1,320 acres	271/N6b	- 4,800 acres
226	- 4,980 acres	TOTAL	39,680 acres

These nine units contain 39,680 acres of public land administered by BLM. All the units are adjacent to some portion of the proposed wilderness within Dinosaur National Monument. These units are distributed along the Monument boundary in a pattern broken by private land and roads. Four of the nine units are greater than 5,000 acres in size. The other five units less than 5,000 acres were carried into intensive inventory because they are contiguous to a proposed wilderness. The primary use of all nine units is grazing with mining claims existing in Unit No. 226. All nine units meet one of the size criteria for wilderness consideration.

NATURALNESS:

These units consist of portions of ridgetops, draws and drainages, and gently sloping grassy areas. The elevations range from 5,000-8,000 feet. The units are located upland along Douglas Mountain, 2-3 miles from the river canyons of the Yampa and Green Rivers which form the core of the DNM wilderness proposal. The distribution pattern caused by intervening private lands and roads interrupts the geographic continuity of the units themselves. Scattered patches of broadleaf trees with some piñon-juniper and ponderosa pine are found along the ridges. Sagebrush and grass are found in the draws and low flatlands. The imprints of man found in these units are mostly related to grazing except for a small timber cut in Unit No. 228. The impact of these imprints is minor because they are relatively few in number when the units are considered individually and do not represent major surface or vegetative disturbances. While evidence of man's activities (primarily grazing) can be found throughout the units, the individual and cumulative visual contrast is slight. Grazing and associated activities are still occurring on most of the adjacent Monument lands that have been proposed for wilderness. Under legislation passed in 1960, the National Park Service will over time phase this activity out of the Monument. These nine units are generally natural in appearance and meet the naturalness criteria for wilderness consideration.

EXPLANATORY NOTE on the Analysis of the Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

Unlike the BLM wilderness inventory, the National Park Service (NPS) in its wilderness proposal for DNM did not distinguish between the opportunities for solitude and the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Instead the NPS considers management of the recreation opportunities to insure opportunities for solitude (i.e. limiting the number of people in the canyons at any one time). The wilderness proposal for the Monument recognizes the river canyons as the heart of the wilderness experience (recreation and solitude considered) in DNM. The NPS also recognized the need to protect this core area from influences and developments that would detract from the wilderness experiences; thus, the vast majority of the undeveloped federal land within the Monument but outside the canyons was also proposed for wilderness designation. The BLM units adjacent to DNM must be evaluated in this context and the determination made whether they too offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation or contribute to those opportunities present in the Monument. Further information on the wilderness proposal for DNM is available in NPS reports.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Five of the nine units are less than 5,000 acres. Because none of these five have a unique or outstanding feature (e.g. deep canyon) which would provide outstanding opportunities for solitude in its own right, these units are dependent on DNM in order to have adequate area, by definition, to meet the outstanding criteria. The remaining four units of greater than 5,000 acres do technically have enough area for opportunities for solitude to present. When considered by themselves, the opportunities in these four units are limited due to lack of any significant topographic or vegetative screening. Some vistas are present which can provide a sense of vastness, but the truly outstanding opportunities for this are on higher elevations outside the units and/or in the Monument. In its wilderness proposal for DNM, the NPS recognizes the river canyons as the heart of the opportunities for a wilderness experience (both recreation and solitude) in the Monument. The land area of the Monument are proposed as wilderness in order to protect the core area from influences and developments that would detract from the wilderness experience. In this context, the adjacent BLM units do not contribute or enhance the outstanding opportunities for a wilderness experience present in the Monument nor do they have such outstanding opportunities in their own right.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Hunting is the primary recreational opportunity of the nine units themselves. As hunting is not allowed in the Monument, this activity is confined to the public lands outside DNM. Other activities that could take place in these units include backpacking, horseback riding, and scenic viewing. The relatively small size of these units and the interrupted geographic pattern is not conducive to freedom of movement within a wilderness setting. Such opportunities would not be outstanding until a visitor reached the blocked configuration of DNM. In addition, there are no supplemental values in the nine units themselves which would enhance the recreational opportunities.

The primary recreational opportunities in the Monument are centered around the river canyons. These canyons provide outstanding boating, scenic viewing, and camping. Because the nine BLM units are upland away from the canyons, they do not directly enhance the outstanding recreational opportunities present in the canyons. The converse is also true; the recreational opportunities of the units and immediately adjacent lands inside DNM are not directly enhanced by the presence of the river canyons. Opportunities for hiking and related activities do exist on the lands between the canyons and the BLM units. Because of the steep topography of the canyons and the linear nature of the river corridors, these intervening lands do not serve as a vital recreational link between the core of the Monument's

CRAIG DISTRICT



wilderness proposal and the adjoining BLM units on the northern boundary. Because the primitive recreation opportunities of the units themselves are limited in variety and extent and they do not directly tie in with the recognized outstanding opportunities in DNM, they are not considered to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

These units all serve as a hunting area for the endangered peregrine falcon, but no nesting sites have been recorded.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints within these nine units are minor in character and rehabilitation is not necessary.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

All nine units meet one of the size criteria (i.e. either 5,000 acres and/or adjacent to a proposed wilderness). The units also remain in an apparently natural condition with minor imprints related primarily to grazing scattered throughout the units. Because of their proximity to Dinosaur National Monument, the opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation must be considered in relation to the wilderness proposal for the Monument. In this context, none of the nine units directly enhance or are enhanced by the recognized outstanding wilderness values present in the river canyons which form the core of the DNM wilderness proposal. While these units, when considered either individually or with the Monument, do have some opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, they are limited in extent and variety. Consequently, these units are not recommended for further wilderness study.

REFERENCES:

Colorado State Planning office Photo Map #:

0116, 0117
0173, 0174, 0175
0176
0233

U.S.G.S. Topographic Quad:

Canyon of Ladore North
Jack Springs, Canyon of Ladore South
Zenobia Peak Greystone
Limestone Hill, Indian Water Canyon

Colorado Surface-Minerals Management Color Quad: NM-1, NM-7

[illegible]

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	CO - 4,520 acres UT - 130 acres Total - 4,650 acres	Inventory No.	UT-080-104
District	Craig, CO Vernal, UT	Area Name	Wild Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to the western boundary of Dinosaur National Monument (DNM) in Colorado and Utah (Woffat - Daggett Counties). Inventoried by Utah BLM under cooperative agreement.

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Wild Mountain consists of 4,650 acres with 130 acres in Utah and 4,520 acres in Colorado. The unit is adjacent to the Jones Hole National Fish Hatchery to the west and proposed wilderness within Dinosaur National Monument to the east and south. A mixture of private and public lands are to the north and northwest. A boundary adjustment was made in the initial inventory excluding 2,153 acres due to a lack of naturalness. No boundary adjustments were made as a result of the intensive inventory. Grazing is the primary use of the unit. When considered with the adjacent Monument this unit does meet the size criteria.

NATURALNESS:

The unit consists of the top and slopes of Wild Mountain with elevations reaching 9,624 at the top of the Mountain. With the exception of the steep vertical wall in the southeast portion of the unit that leads to the Jones Hole Creek drainage, the majority of the terrain consists of gently rolling sagebrush slopes. Imprints of man's activities are scattered throughout the unit. These imprints are primarily related to grazing and consist of numerous ways, fences, and reservoirs. None of these imprints represent a major surface or vegetative disturbance. Taken cumulatively, their impact is also slight due to their scattered distribution. The unit meets the naturalness criteria for wilderness consideration.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude are very limited within the unit due to the unit's open character with little vegetative or topographic screening. This lack of screening would increase the opportunity for encountering others or being aware of the presence of others while in the unit. Use would tend to be concentrated on the top of Wild Mountain resulting in diminished opportunities to be alone. The presence of the Dinosaur National Monument to the south would not enhance the unit's potential for providing solitude as the unit is upland and away from the core of the Monument's wilderness proposal. (For further information on the DNM wilderness proposal, see the Summary for Units CO-010-218, CO-010-271/N68).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreational opportunities are limited within the unit. The terrain is repetitious and does not provide an interesting setting for recreational experiences of hiking, camping or backpacking. One recreational opportunity is available for a very limited number of users on the small area on the top of Wild Mountain. This offers a 360° vista of the near and distant surrounding landscape. Some hunting is also available, but not considered to be outstanding in a regional context. Overall, the unit offers limited opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

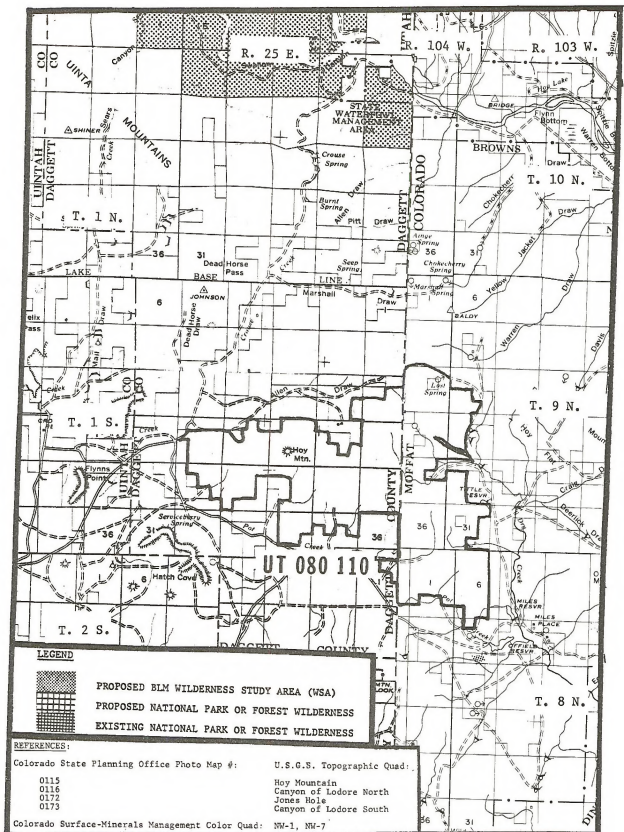
No Supplemental values have been noted in the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints are determined to be minor and rehabilitation is not necessary.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The unit does not provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude due to the unit's open character and its lack of vegetation or topographic screening. The unit also does not provide an outstanding opportunity for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Recreational opportunities are limited within the majority of the unit. The top of Wild Mountain does offer a 360° landscape vista, but this activity does not provide an outstanding wilderness experience due to its singularity and the very confining nature of the terrain which would restrict most activity to Wild Mountain itself. Because outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are not present, the unit does not qualify for further wilderness study.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	CO - 5,254 acres UT - 5,515 acres Total - 10,769 acres	Inventory No.	UT-080-110
District	Craig, CO Vernal, UT	Area Name	Hoy Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: West of Dinosaur National Monument in both Utah and Colorado (Hoffat - Daggett Counties).
Inventoried by Utah BLM under cooperative agreement.

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Utah-Colorado state line crosses the unit with 5,515 acres in Utah and 5,254 acres in Colorado. A boundary adjustment was made in the Initial Inventory excluding 195 acres due to imprints of man. No boundary adjustments were made as a result of the intensive inventory. Surrounding lands are a mixture of State, private and public lands.

NATURALNESS:

The unit consists of the peak of Hoy Mountain (elevation 8,850 feet), and its steep side slopes with numerous quartzite rock outcroppings. Vegetation is varied, pinyon-juniper being dominant, with scattered areas of Mountain Mahogany, Ponderosa pine, fir and aspen. Imprints of man occur along the periphery of the unit. They are primarily associated with grazing in the form of trails, ways and water developments. They do not represent major surface or vegetative disturbances, thus, their visual contrast is slight. The bulk of the unit is in a natural condition.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The rugged terrain and vegetation do allow for some opportunities for solitude. Such opportunities are limited due to the topography of the unit being that of a singular small mountain peak which would concentrate users on the top of Hoy Mountain. The irregular configuration due to private lands limits use of the side slopes of the mountain, adding to a very restricted type of solitude. Because the opportunities for solitude are limited, they are not considered to be outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The terrain and vegetation offer an interesting and challenging setting for hiking and backpacking. Numerous wildlife provides opportunities for hunting and wildlife observation. The topography of the unit, being the singular peak of Hoy Mountain, limits the dispersal ability of the unit and the number of users. The irregular shape and narrow portions of the unit due to adjacent private lands restrict movement and confine activities, not allowing for outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation to exist.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

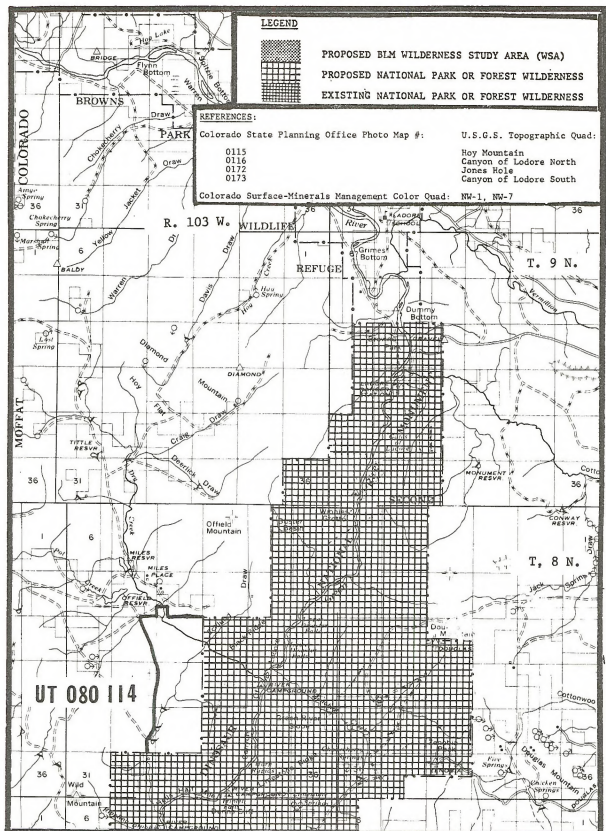
No supplemental values have been noted in the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints are minor in character and rehabilitation is not necessary.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The area does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The adjacent private land creates a very irregular configuration with narrow portions of land that confine and restrict movement and activities. The topography, being that of a singular mountain peak, limits use and would tend to concentrate use on the small mountaintop area, reducing the opportunities for solitude. The restrictive shape and singular topographic feature prevents the opportunities for solitude or a primitive or unconfined type of recreation from being outstanding. Because these characteristics are lacking, this unit is not recommended for further wilderness study.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Craig District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 2,071 acres
District Craig

Inventory No. UT-080-114
Area Name Pot Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to the western boundary of Dinosaur National Monument (DNM) in Colorado (Moffat County). Inventoried by Utah BLM under cooperative agreement.

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Pot Creek unit is entirely public land within the State of Colorado consisting of 2,071 acres adjacent to the western boundary of DNM. No boundary adjustments have been made in either the initial or intensive inventory. When considered with the proposed wilderness within the Monument, this unit is of sufficient size to be managed as a wilderness area. The unit is used primarily for grazing and hunting.

NATURALNESS:

The area is a broad, flat to gently rolling valley bottom. Pot Creek flows through the northeast corner, creating steeper slopes. Predominant vegetation type is big sage. Numerous imprints of man occur in this small area in the form of numerous ways, fencing with red metal posts and red and white stabilizing barrels, and three developed reservoirs. Because of the small size and the lack of vegetative screening, the imprints are substantially noticeable and detract from the unit's naturalness.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The small size of the unit, flat topography, and low lying sparse vegetation limit the opportunities for avoiding the sights and sounds of others. The Pot Creek area of the northeast corner of the unit offers some diversity in terrain and vegetative screening for solitude. The presence of Dinosaur National Monument to the south and southwest does not significantly affect the opportunities for solitude within the unit. The core of the wilderness proposal in DNM is the river canyons. This unit is upland from the canyon of the Green River; therefore, there is not a direct relationship between the wilderness values of the Monument and this unit. (For further discussion of DNM, see the summary for Units CO-010-218 - CO-010-271/NGB.)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The lack of any outstanding features, the imprints of man, and the openness of the unit all limit the opportunities for outstanding recreational experiences within the unit. The presence of the Dinosaur National Monument does not increase the quality of experiences within this area (see discussion of solitude). The lack of vegetation and diversity of terrain do not provide a unique or outstanding setting for recreational activities to occur.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No supplemental values have been noted in the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

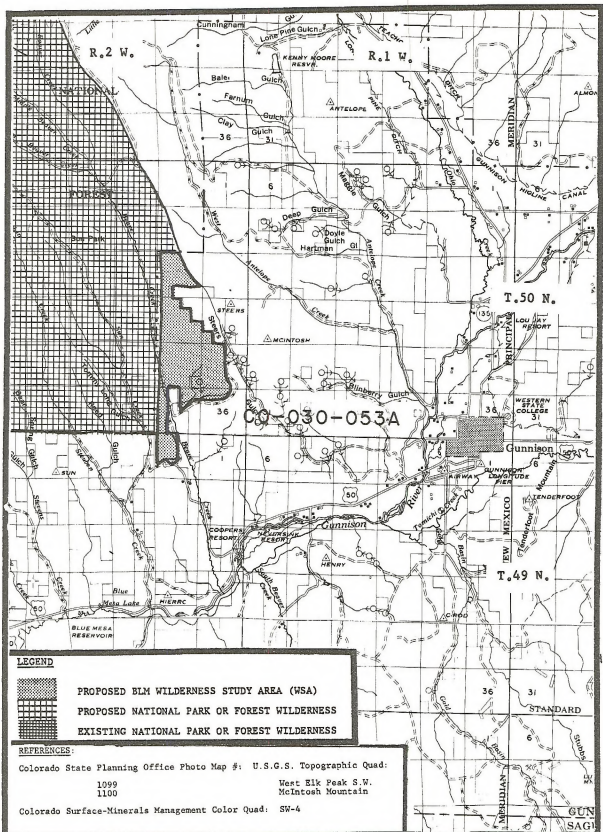
The imprints within this unit are determined to be major and substantially noticeable. It would require a major effort to rehabilitate this unit to a substantially natural condition.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The imprints of man's work is substantially noticeable in the form of numerous ways, fences and reservoirs. This, combined with the area's open terrain and lack of screening vegetation, restricts the outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The presence of the Dinosaur National Monument to the south and west does not create outstanding opportunities for solitude or recreation within the unit, nor does the unit contribute to the outstanding opportunities present in the Monument. Due to the above reasons, this area does not qualify for further wilderness study.

MONTROSE DISTRICT

AREAS RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 2,440 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-053A
Area Name Steers Gulch

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Gunnison National Forest - Northeast Blue Mesa Reservoir near Gunnison,
(Gunnison County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted in the summer of 1978. Initially, the unit contained 16,800 acres of public land. Intensive field inventory, however, revealed two roads within the unit which divided the area into three portions. One portion did not meet size criteria and was deleted from further study. Another portion, due to its irregular configuration, lack of vegetative screening, and large private inholding acreage was determined not to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation and, as a result, was also deleted. After these boundary alterations, the unit consists of 2,440 acres of public land adjacent to RARE II Area 198 (50,660 acres). The contiguous nature of this area with proposed Forest Service wilderness satisfies the size criteria for a Wilderness Study Area. All the lands within the unit are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The entire area is leased for grazing. It is surrounded by a mixture of public, private and Forest Service lands.

NATURALNESS:

Gently rolling hills and small washes are the dominant topography of the Steers Gulch Unit. Topography becomes more rugged within Forest Service land. Vegetation is predominantly sagebrush/grassland. The unit was determined to be primarily natural in character with man's imprints substantially unnoticeable. Two ways exist within the unit, one branching off from Beaver Creek and the other entering the unit from private land to the east. Both are substantially unnoticeable and do not affect the naturalness of the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to its small size, the unit (by itself) would not provide outstanding opportunities for solitude, but the rolling nature of the topography, along with the more extensive forested area contained within the contiguous Forest Service lands would provide topographic and vegetative screening enhancing opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The gently rolling and open terrain of this unit does not, by itself, provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. However, topographically the area is a natural extension of the contiguous 50,660-acre USFS RARE II Area #198. This large combined acreage would provide outstanding opportunities for a number of primitive and unconfined recreation activities such as hiking, horseback riding, hunting, cross-country skiing and mountain climbing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No supplemental values are known within the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The unit is essentially natural in character. Only minor imprints exist within the unit and do not require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

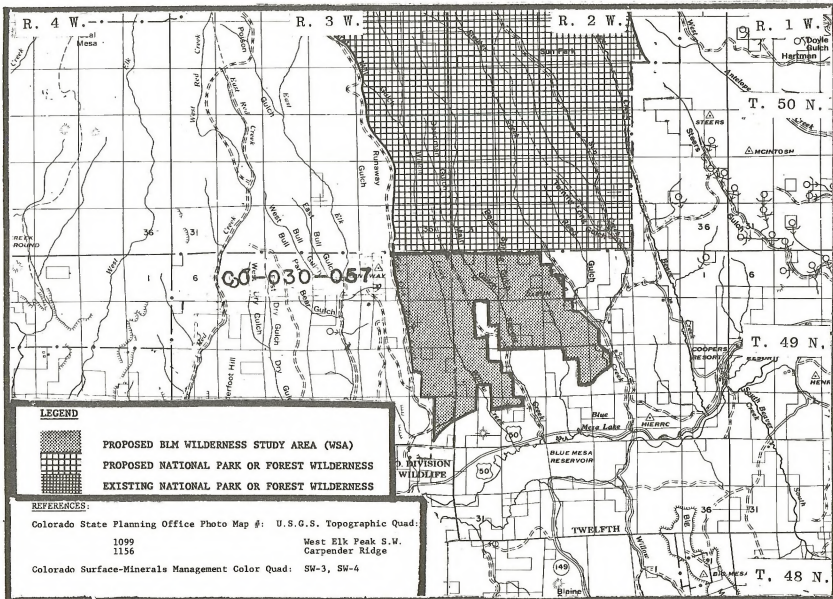
In combination with the contiguous Forest Service RARE II Area, this unit meets the size requirement for a Wilderness Study Area. It is primarily natural in character with only minor imprints of man in the form of ways (2). When considered in conjunction with contiguous Forest Service lands, which are a natural extension of lands within the area, the unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. Unit CO-030-053A meets all the criteria of a Wilderness Study Area.

1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 m. = 1 Mile

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District



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UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 6,070 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-057
Area Name Willow Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Gunnison National Forest - North of Blue Mesa Reservoir near Gunnison
(Gunnison County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. The intensive inventory boundaries remain the same as those previously identified. The Willow Creek Unit contains 6,070 acres of public lands, making it of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation as a wilderness area. In addition, the unit is bounded to the north by Gunnison National Forest RARE II Area #198 which is proposed for wilderness designation, contributing to the unit's potential wilderness acreage. The area is leased for grazing. It contains no known mining claims or easements. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public, private and Forest Service lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Willow Creek Unit is characterized by rolling topography cut by narrow gulches. The highest and lowest elevations are 9,440 feet and 7,900 feet, respectively, with a general downslope from the north towards the southern boundary. Aspen and spruce can be found in the higher elevations and along the sideslopes of the drainages. The drainages contain a thick vegetative cover of cottonwood, oakbrush and willow along with a variety of other perennial shrubs. Along the open rolling terrain characterizing the rest of the unit, sagebrush and grasses dominate the landscape. The area has been affected primarily by the forces of nature with only minor imprints of man. Man's work in the area is limited to six miles of ways and eleven developed springs. The ways are maintained solely by the passage of vehicles and in many places consist of no more than two tire tracks. All are revegetating naturally and do not substantially affect the naturalness of the area. The developed springs are substantially unnoticeable due to revegetation and vegetative and topographic screening.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Though the unit contains a number of factors that hinder opportunities for solitude such as low acreage, narrow configuration and sparse, low-lying vegetation (sagebrush grassland), good opportunities for solitude can be found in the northern section of the unit where stands of aspen and spruce break up the area into smaller viewsheds. When considering this area in conjunction with the RARE II Area #198, which would contribute additional acreage, numerous forested drainages and 12,000-foot peaks, outstanding opportunities for solitude would exist.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Due to its small size and narrow configuration, the unit would not by itself offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. However, when viewed in conjunction with the adjacent RARE II Area #198, which would add additional acreage and which is a natural extension of the unit, the Willow Creek Unit would provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

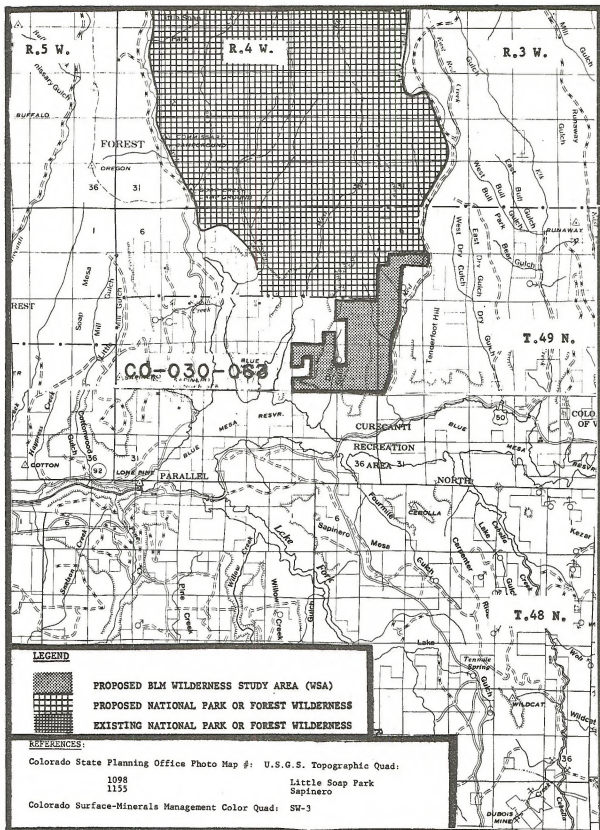
No supplemental values are known within the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints are rehabilitating naturally and require no manipulation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Willow Creek Unit is of sufficient size to be considered as a Wilderness Study Area and is essentially natural in character. This unit is a natural extension of adjacent National Forest lands. In combination with the contiguous RARE II Area which contains numerous forested drainages and high peaks, the unit would provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. Overall, the unit meets the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



1/2 1 2 3 4
 1/2 in. = 1 Mile

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 2,520 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-063
Area Name Oillon Mesa

GENERAL LOCATION:

Adjacent to Gunnison National Forest, north of Blue Mesa Reservoir (Gunnison County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the final initial inventory. The Oillon Mesa Unit contains 2,520 acres of public land with no private land inholdings. When considered along with adjacent (Gunnison National Forest RARE II Area #196, 121,080 acres), the unit meets the size criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area. Portions of the unit are leased for grazing. There are no known mining claims or easements. All the land within the unit is public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public and private land.

NATURALNESS:

The Dillon Mesa unit consists of the relatively flat top of Oillon Mesa and the steep side slopes descending to the east and west boundary. The west arm of the mesa has unusual geological formations known as hoodoos which are upright fingers of eroded material with an erosion-resistant caprock on top. Vegetation is primarily sagebrush grassland with some oakbrush and cottonwood near the creeks. The unit contains a way less than a mile in length, ascending a side drainage of Red Creek. The way is substantially unnoticeable consisting of merely two tire tracks in some parts. It is revegetating and has an insubstantial effect upon the naturalness of the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The unit by itself does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude due to its small size and single, dominant vegetative type. However, when considered in combination with RARE II Area #196, which contains 121,680 acres and is a natural extension of the unit, outstanding opportunities for solitude do exist.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Due to the relatively small acreage and single, dominant vegetative type, the area would not be itself provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. However, the area is adjacent to, and a natural extension of, RARE II Area #196 (121,680 acres proposed by the Forest Service for wilderness). Combined, the unit would contain outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

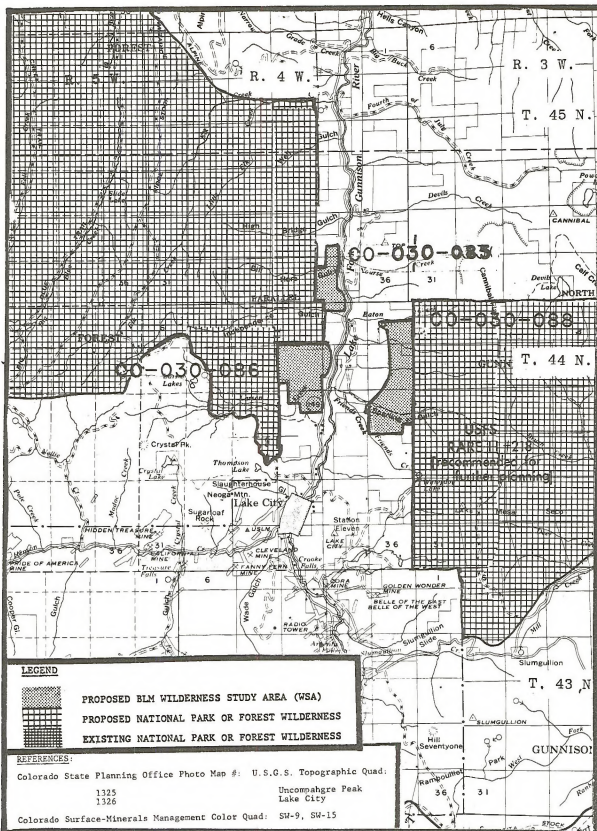
The hoodoos on the western leg of Oillon Mesa are highly scenic geological forms and are considered to add supplemental value to the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The unit is natural in character and no areas need rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

When considered in combination with RARE II Area #196, the Oillon Mesa Unit meets the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area. This unit is a natural extension (without separating barriers) of adjacent National Forest lands. It is of sufficient acreage and contains outstanding opportunities for both solitude and a primitive and unconfined recreation. The unusual geologic formations called hoodoos, in the southwestern section of the unit, add supplemental value to the unit. This unit meets the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



Recommended as a W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-030-085

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 400 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No CO-030-085
Area Name Bill Hare Gulch

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Uncompahgre National Forest - North of Lake City (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the final initial inventory. The unit contains 400 acres of public lands with no private inholdings. It is contiguous with the Big Blue RARE II Area (37,095 acres) proposed for wilderness designation by the Forest Service, thus satisfying size criteria for a wilderness study area. There are no known leases, mining claims or easements within the unit. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of private and National Forest lands.

NATURALNESS:

The unit includes the lower end of three gulches whose upper portions are contiguous to Forest Service lands. The terrain is steep with limited access. The vegetation consists of aspen and conifers with oakbrush and other shrubs along the drainages. The area contains no substantial imprints of man and remains natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The area contains 400 acres which would not by itself provide outstanding opportunities for solitude; however, the area is adjacent to the 37,095-acre Big Blue RARE II Area proposed by the Forest Service for wilderness designation. This area would provide large acreage, vegetative screening, and vast vistas that would enhance solitude opportunities. These areas in combination would provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Though the unit by itself would not provide outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, contiguous Forest Service RARE II Lands which are a natural extension of the unit, would provide a large additional acreage containing rugged, forested terrain and high mountain peaks. This combined acreage would provide numerous outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The area contains no supplemental values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

No portions of the unit require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Bill Hare Gulch Unit meets all the criteria of a wilderness study area. Though the unit's size is less than 5,000 acres, it is contiguous with the Big Blue RARE II Area proposed by the Forest Service for wilderness designation, thus meeting size requirements. The area is substantially free of man's imprints and is primarily affected by the forces of nature. When considered with contiguous National Forest land, which is a natural topographic and vegetative extension of the unit, the area offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Recommended as a W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-030-086

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 880 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-086
Area No. Larson Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: About two miles north of Lake City, adjacent to the Uncompahgre National Forest (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit consists of 880 acres of public land with no private inholdings. By itself, it is not of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; however, it is adjacent to the U.S. Forest Service Big Blue RARE II Area #908 (37,095 acres) which has been recommended for wilderness designation. The combined acreage is of sufficient size to be managed as wilderness. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of Forest Service, private and public land. There are no known mining claims, easements or leases within the unit.

NATURALNESS:

This unit consists primarily of the steep western slope of the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River Canyon. The upper portions of the unit are over 10,000 feet in elevation. Several deep, rugged side canyons cut across the unit from west to east and enter the Lake Fork. The vegetation is primarily pine and aspen with some open areas. There are no significant imprints of man within the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

On its own this unit is too small (880 acres) to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. However, the area is contiguous with a 37,095-acre Forest Service proposed wilderness area #908 (Big Blue). Within this large combined land area, dense vegetation and rough topography would provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

By itself, the unit would not provide outstanding recreation opportunities. However, in conjunction with the adjacent Forest Service proposed wilderness, there would be outstanding opportunities for such primitive and unconfined recreation activities as hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding and cross-country skiing. The combined area contains a large acreage of rugged mountain terrain with numerous forested drainages and high mountain peaks which would enhance recreation opportunities in the Larson Creek Unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains no supplemental values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are no imprints of man within the unit.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit, consisting of 880 acres of public land, does not (by itself) satisfy the size requirement for a W.S.A. However, it is contiguous with a 37,095-acre proposed Forest Service wilderness, therefore being of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. In conjunction with the contiguous Forest Service land--a natural extension of the unit containing numerous forested drainages and high mountain peaks--there would be outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The unit meets all the criteria of a Wilderness Study Area.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 1,120 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-088
Area Name Sparling Gulch

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Uncompahgre National Forest - North of Lake City (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. The intensive inventory boundaries remain the same as those previously identified. Though the unit itself only contains 1,120 acres, it is contiguous with Gunnison National Forest RARE II Area #218 (31,900 acres), thus meeting size criteria for wilderness study. All lands within the unit are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. It is surrounded by a mixture of public, private and National Forest Service lands. There are no known mining claims or easements within the unit. Portions of the unit are leased for grazing.

NATURALNESS:

The Sparling Gulch Unit consists of a few drainages and side slopes of the Cannibal Plateau. The side slopes are sparsely vegetated with sagebrush and grasses. Some small isolated stands of aspen are found in this grassland area near the top of the plateau. In contrast, the drainages support thick stands of aspen and spruce. A few ways ascend to the plateau but they have little impact upon the naturalness of the unit due to revegetation. Another way parallels Sparling Gulch, but is also returning to a natural condition. Its impact upon the naturalness of the unit is negligible due to revegetation, vegetative screening and topographic screening. The area has been determined to be primarily affected by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The small size of the unit, along with the lack of topographic and vegetative diversity, would not provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. However, when considered in combination with the adjacent RARE II Area #218, which contains rugged, mountain terrain and dense sub-alpine forest vegetation, the unit would provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

This unit is too small and does not contain sufficient diversity of vegetation and topography by itself to provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. However, it is a logical extension of the contiguous RARE II Area which contains a large acreage of rugged mountain terrain. The combined area would provide outstanding opportunities for diverse primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No known supplemental values were found within the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREA RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

No imprints within the unit require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

When considered in combination with RARE II Area #218 and the Powderhorn Instant Study Area, the Sparling Gulch Unit meets the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area. Because of its contiguous nature with these potential wilderness areas, it contains sufficient acreage to meet size requirements. It is free of substantially noticeable imprints of a man and is primarily affected by the forces of nature. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation are possible within the topographic and vegetative diversity provided by the adjacent lands.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 50,060 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-089
Area Name Powderhorn (ISA)

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to the Gunnison National Forest, seven miles northeast of Lake City (Gunnison-Hinsdale Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The majority of this unit (40,400 acres) is included in the Powderhorn Primitive Area which is an Instant Study Area (ISA) causing it and contiguous lands (77,140 acres total) to receive an intensive inventory in the summer of 1978. During this inventory, 9,920 acres were determined unnatural in character due to timber harvests, mineral exploration pits, and contour furrowing. The deletion of the unnatural sections and adjacent private land left the northern portion of the unit with a very irregular boundary of four fingerlike extensions often less than a mile in width. The confining nature of the boundary and short core-to-perimeter distances within the fingers were judged to prevent outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation causing an additional 17,140 acres to be deleted from the area. After these boundary adjustments, the unit consists of 50,060 acres of public lands and 1,240 acres of private land which is sufficient to satisfy the size criteria: Additionally, contiguous to the unit on the south is the USFS RARE II Area No. 218 (31,990 acres) which is being further studied for wilderness potential. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public, private, state and National Forest lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Powderhorn area is characterized by relatively level alpine plateaus giving way to steep-sided canyons. The elevations range from 12,600 feet on Calf Creek Plateau at the south end to about 8,600 feet along Powderhorn Creek at the north end. Vegetation generally follows the elevations with alpine tundra, spruce/fir forests, ponderosa pine and parks, and sagebrush/grassland being present. The imprints of man within the unit are generally widely scattered and have a limited impact due to vegetative and topographic screening. The imprints include four old log cabins in varying stages of deterioration, about 12 miles of ways which are revegetating, and range projects such as fences and stock ponds. The imprints within the unit were determined to be substantially unnoticeable with the area affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The large size of the unit (50,060 acres) with its rugged terrain caused by steep-sided drainages radiating outward from Calf Creek Plateau, provide numerous locations where opportunities for solitude are present. The dense stands of spruce, fir and aspen found along these drainages further enhance solitude opportunities by dividing the area into smaller viewsheds allowing seclusion. The higher elevations on Calf Creek and Cannibal Plateaus offer sweeping vistas of the surrounding mountainous landscape projecting a feeling of vastness which enhances solitude. Due to these factors, outstanding opportunities for solitude would be present in the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The blocklike configuration and substantial acreage allow for the unconfined movement of recreationists, particularly over the alpine tundra portions of the area. These areas provide excellent locations for hiking or horseback riding during the summer and cross-country skiing/snowshoeing during the winter period. Lakes in the area and the forks of Powderhorn Creek provide excellent fishing opportunities as well as scenic locations for camping. The varied wildlife of the area, including beaver, ptarmigan and a sizeable elk herd, provide ample viewing and hunting possibilities. These factors contribute to and provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

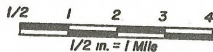
The upper portions of the Calf Creek and Cannibal Plateaus are reported to be the largest expanse of relatively flat alpine tundra vegetation in the contiguous United States providing unique scientific and educational opportunities. The combination of the topographic and vegetative diversity in the unit with the surrounding mountains terrain provide an excellent visual enhancement supplementing the many activities which occur in the area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

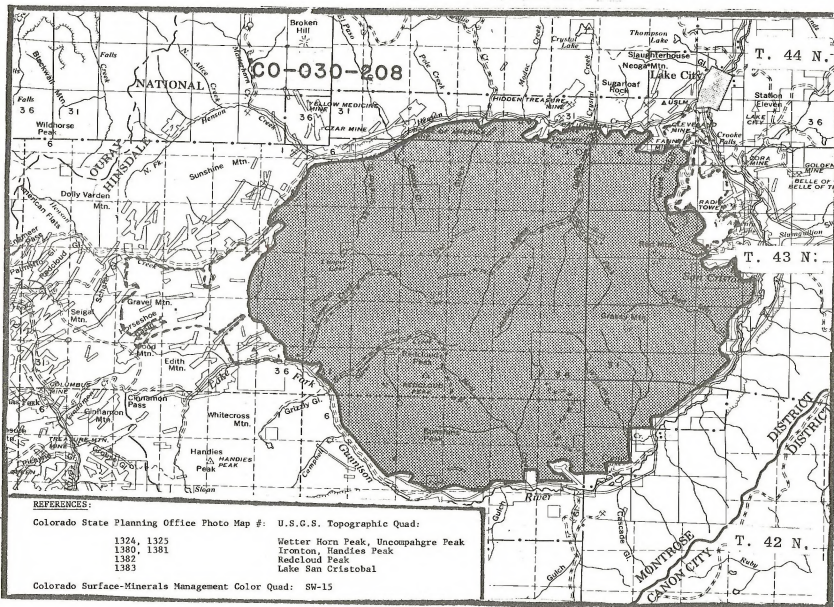
The unit is essentially natural in character. Only minor imprints of man exist in the unit and these are revegetating naturally, not requiring rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Unit CO-030-089 meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area. The unit is primarily natural in character and its large size (50,060 acres) and blocklike configuration allow for its management in an unimpaired condition. Its rugged topography and diverse vegetation provide outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, the unique alpine tundra areas and the high scenic quality of the area add supplemental values.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 33,860 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-208
Area Name Redcloud Peak

GENERAL LOCATION: Southwest of Lake City (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. Several adjustments to the boundary have been made. A vehicle route descending Round Top Mountain and terminating near Lake San Cristobal was determined to be a road. Part of the eastern boundary has been altered to exclude this road and approximately 1,100 acres of land to the east. In the western portion of the unit, about 3,000 acres were found not to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation due to the irregular boundary and numerous private inholdings. This was also determined to be the case with two additional parcels of 40 and 100 acres. After boundary adjustments, the Redcloud Peak inventory unit encompasses approximately 33,860 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. There are approximately 280 acres of private inholdings, mostly in the form of patented mining claims, but these are not considered in the unit acreage or inventoried for wilderness characteristics. Both patented and unpatented mining claims are dispersed throughout the unit. Portions of the unit are also leased for grazing. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public BLM lands and private lands.

NATURALNESS:

The rugged topography of the unit consists of steep drainages radiating from numerous mountain peaks as high as 14,000 feet. The vegetation varies with altitude, with fir, spruce and aspen occupying many of the lower elevation drainages and slopes, and fading into alpine tundra in the higher basins. The unit is primarily natural in character and contains only minor imprints of man. Four ways follow the major gulches within the unit, but they have been closed to motorized traffic and are returning to a natural condition through the process of revegetation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the rugged mountain terrain and vegetative variety contained within the unit, outstanding opportunities for solitude exist. Vegetative and topographic screening within the drainages and along the lower elevation slopes provide areas of seclusion and intimacy. In the higher elevations, the mountainous terrain with its expanses of alpine tundra and open scenic vistas projects feelings of vastness, which contributes to outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The topographic and vegetative diversity within the unit, as well as the high scenic quality of the mountainous terrain, provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Recreation activities possible within the unit include hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, mountain climbing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, photography and sightseeing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

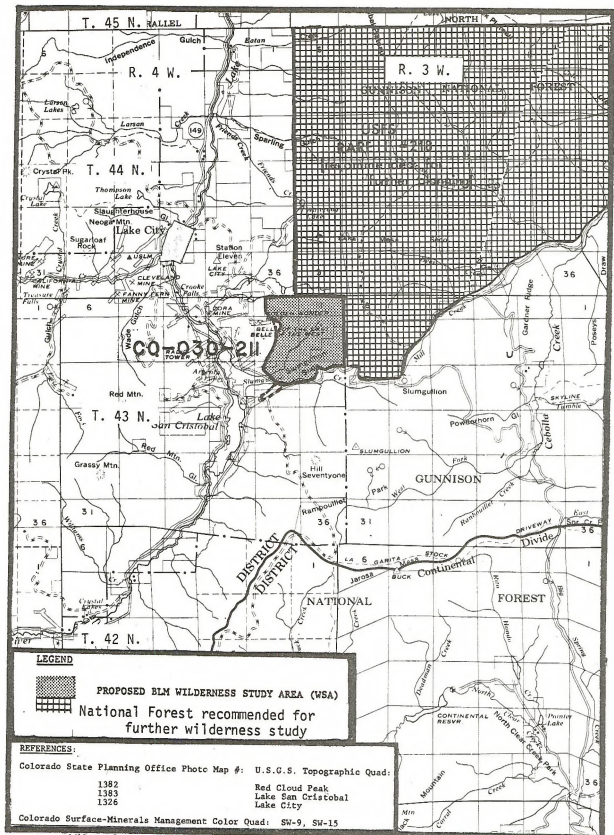
The outstanding scenic quality of this mountain terrain with high mountain peaks and alpine lakes and streams, is considered as a supplemental value.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

None of the imprints of man within this unit require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The unit contains a large tract of land of natural character making it practicable to preserve and use in an unimpaired condition. Its rugged topography and diverse vegetation provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The high scenic quality of the area adds supplemental value to the unit. The unit meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 1,890 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-211
Area Name Slungullion Slide

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Gunnison National Forest southwest of Lake City (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. The intensive inventory boundaries have been adjusted to exclude approximately 70 acres in the western portion of the unit. Examination of aerial photos and field evaluation revealed old constructed roads that significantly impaired naturalness, and formed a configuration so narrow that wilderness values of solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation were significantly impaired. The Slungullion Slide unit (after boundary adjustments) contains approximately 1,890 acres of public lands which are contiguous with the 31,990-acre U.S. Forest Service RARE II Area #218 (proposed for further wilderness study), thus meeting size requirements for wilderness study. There are no known patented claims within the unit. A portion of the unit is leased for the grazing of cattle. This unit also contains 720 acres of a National History Landmark withdrawal, covering the Slungullion Earthflow. The unit is surrounded by private lands, BLM public lands and Forest Service lands.

NATURALNESS:

The majority of the unit is forested with spruce, aspen and Douglas fir; however, several meadows up to 100 acres in size are within the unit. The Slungullion Earthflow is in the southern portion of the unit. Most of the unit is steep, rising from 9,500 feet to 10,700 feet within a mile. Imprints of man appear to be minor. There is an old fence line and about 1/2 mile of way that is impassable to vehicles. Most of this is within a densely forested area and is screened from view. The unit appears to be primarily natural in character with man's work substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The area contains 1,890 acres, most of which are densely forested with spruce, aspen and Douglas fir. Several meadows within the unit are surrounded by these forested areas, and screen users from one another. Outstanding opportunities for solitude can be found within the Slungullion Slide unit, especially when considered with the contiguous 31,990 acres of National Forest lands being recommended for further wilderness study.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for primitive recreation do exist within the unit, such as hiking, hunting, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, photography and sightseeing. The Slungullion Earthflow is an outstanding natural feature for photography and sightseeing; however, the unit alone does not provide for outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The combined acreage of public and National Forest lands offers outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

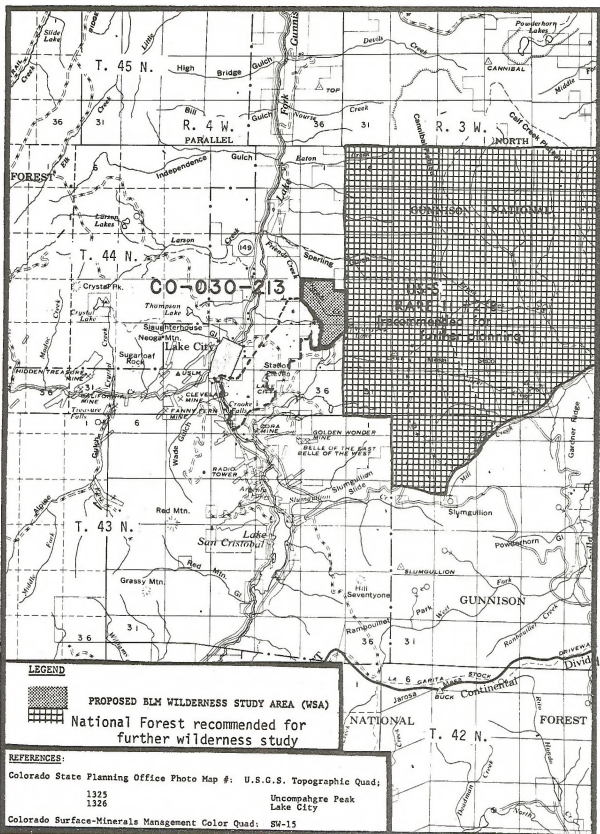
This area contains the major portion (2 1/2 miles) of the Slungullion Earthflow, which originates on the western edge of Ganibal Plateau, and flows about 4 1/2 miles into the valley, blocking the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River, creating Lake San Cristobal. This action took place about 1270 A.D. with a smaller earthflow, which is still active, occurring about 350 years ago. This active flow moves about 0.48 inches per day and this is evidenced by trees growing on an angle, while the trees growing on the inactive flow are straight. This earthflow provides an excellent supplemental value for geologic and scenic interests.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Imprints appear to be minor without a need for active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Slungullion Slide unit is 1,890 acres of public lands contiguous with 31,990 acres of Forest Service lands recommended for further wilderness study. The combined area is of sufficient size to make practicable its management in an unimpaired condition. Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist within the unit. Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist within the combined 33,880 acres of public and Forest lands which contain dense forest and rugged mountain terrain. The unit also contains supplemental values associated with the Slungullion Earthflow. This unit meets the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 720 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-213
Area Name Friends Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Gunnison National Forest east of Lake City (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. As a result of review and field evaluation of the intensive inventory (Summer, 1979), 1,320 acres of public land have been deleted from the unit. That portion which was deleted is separated from the part of the unit which is contiguous with National Forest lands by steep slopes and has gently rolling topography with low grassland vegetation. This part of the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. The area is contiguous with 31,890 acres of Forest Service land that has been recommended for further wilderness study by the Forest Service (RARE II Area #218), thus meeting size criteria. All of the lands within the unit are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The area is surrounded by private land, BLM public lands and National Forest lands.

NATURALNESS:

The unit consists of steep drainages and westerly-trending sideslopes off the Cannibal Plateau. It contains forested areas of aspen, spruce and fir, with open meadows interspersed throughout. The unit is primarily natural in character without noticeable imprints of man.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The heavily forested areas and the secluded meadows offer outstanding opportunities for solitude due to vegetative screening. In addition, this unit is a natural landscape continuation of the contiguous RARE II Area No. 218 which contains rugged mountain topography and dense forest cover. This combined area would greatly enhance opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The limited acreage of this unit would restrict primitive recreation opportunities. However, this unit is contiguous with, and a natural extension of, RARE II Area No. 218 which contains a large acreage of rugged mountain terrain with numerous lakes and streams. This combined acreage would provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation activities such as hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and sightseeing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

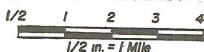
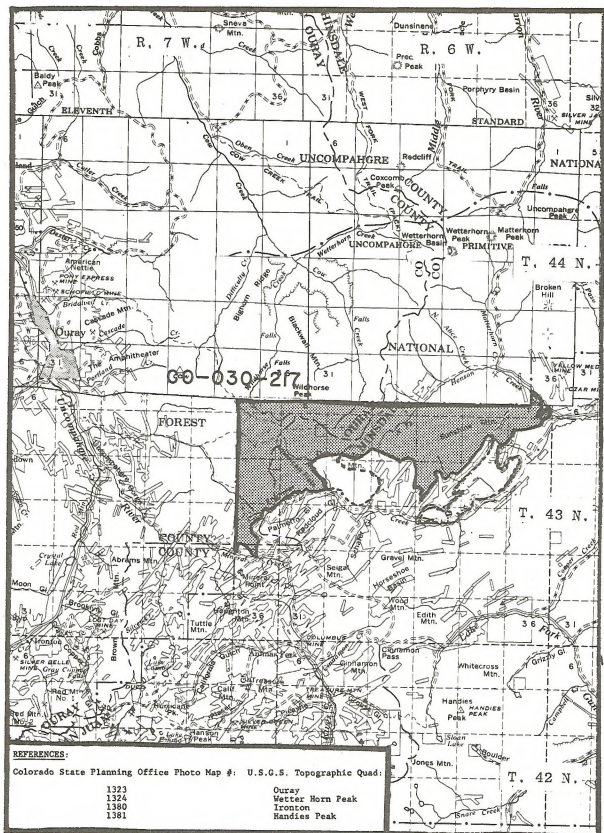
No supplemental values were found within the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There is only one minor imprint of man within this unit and it is rehabilitating naturally.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Friends Creek unit, though small in size, is adjacent to U.S. Forest Service RARE II Area #218, thus meeting size criteria for wilderness study. It is primarily natural in character with man's imprints substantially unnoticeable. Vegetative screening in the forested sections of the unit provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. In combination with adjacent Forest Service lands, outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist. The unit meets all the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 6,700 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-217
Area Name American Flats

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 4 miles southeast of Ouray (Ouray County - San Juan County - Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1976. After boundary adjustments made at that time, this unit consisted of 7,900 acres. As a result of work done during the summer of 1979, additional acreage (1,200 acres) was deleted from the southeastern and southern portion of the unit. 640 acres were found to lack outstanding opportunities for either solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation due to its narrow configuration with a road on one side and private land on the other. It was attached to the unit only by a narrow "neck" of public land. The other portion (680 acres) was deleted to exclude associated mining activities and a vehicle way which in places was substantially noticeable. After boundary adjustments, this unit consists of 6,700 acres of public land—sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. In addition, this unit is contiguous with the U.S. Forest Service Uncompahgre Primitive Area. There are patented mining claims within the unit and approximately 40 acres of private land inholdings in the form of patented mining claims. The entire area is leased for grazing. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of BLM public lands, private lands and U.S. Forest Service lands.

NATURALNESS:

The majority of the American Flats unit is alpine tundra. About ten drainages radiate from Dolly Varden (12,932 feet) and Sunshine (12,457 feet) Mountains. Portions of these are below timberline and are forested with spruce. Imprints of man within the unit are from access routes to patented mining claims, and the use of the area for sheep grazing. About four miles of ways, are two-track jeep trails having a low impact on the naturalness of the area. In the context of the large open tundra region encompassed by the unit and surrounding public and Forest lands, these imprints are substantially unnoticeable. The mountainous landscape with numerous drainages also tends to screen the ways from view. Unit CO-030-217 is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Although alpine tundra does not provide vegetative screening and opportunities for solitude, the numerous drainages with elevations ranging from 10,000 feet to 13,000 feet provide such opportunities. In combination with the large acreage of the contiguous Forest Service primitive area and those portions within the unit forested with spruce, outstanding opportunities for solitude exist.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The alpine tundra vegetation of the area allows unconfined movement for hiking activities. This, in combination with the high scenic quality of the mountainous landscape, provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation activities such as hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, mountain climbing, cross-country skiing, photography or sightseeing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

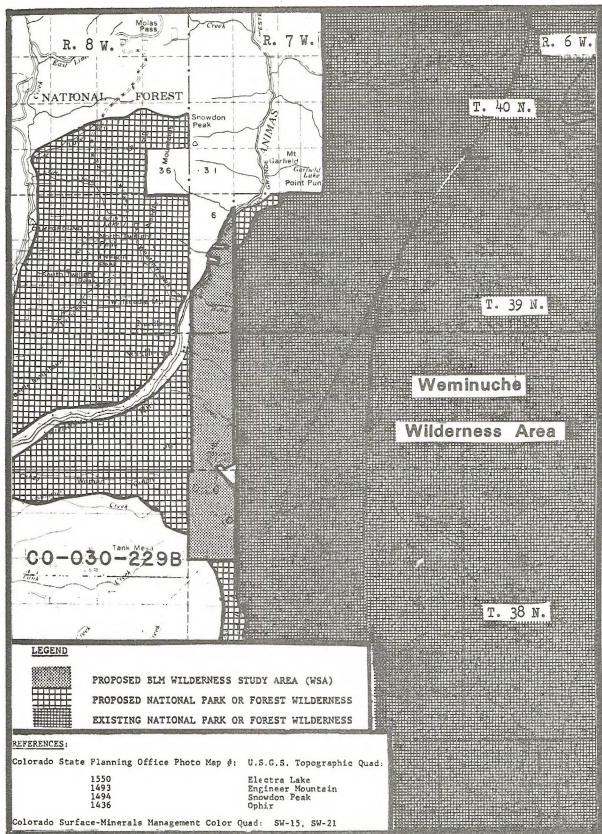
The scenic quality of the area is outstanding due to the alpine tundra with its colorful summer flower display and the numerous 13,000-foot plus mountain peaks both within and surrounding the area. Within this area are the plant species *Altia Starwort* (*Stellaria fririgis*) and Porter's Groundsel (*Senecio porteri*) which are proposed endangered on the Federal Register list of Endangered and Threatened Plants.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are no major imprints of man within the unit that would require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

American Flats inventory unit is of sufficient size to make practicable its use and preservation in an unimpaired condition. The unit appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable. The mountain landscape with large open areas of alpine tundra and numerous drainages that descend from Dolly Varden and Sunshine Mountains provide both outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined recreation. The area has several "supplemental values", including the outstanding scenic value of the surrounding mountains and the presence of "ecologically unique" plant species. This unit meets the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



1/2 1 2 3 4 94
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 4,200 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-229B
Area Name Needle Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately nine miles south of Silverton (La Plata - San Juan Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit contains 4,200 acres of public land with no non-public land inholdings. It is contiguous with the 401, 400-acre National Forest Weminuche Wilderness Area and three RARE II areas that have been recommended for wilderness designation by the National Forest Service (31,230 acres total). In combination with these areas, it is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. There are no leases, easements or patented mining claims within the unit. It does contain several unpatented mining claims. It is surrounded by a mixture of public lands, National Forest lands and private land.

NATURALNESS:

The Needle Creek unit consists of rugged, high mountain terrain including a portion of the Animas River Gorge and Mountain View Crest. Past glaciation has created a series of cirques on the north side of Mountain View Crest, each of which contains a clear alpine lake. Numerous small streams cascade down the cirque basins. Vegetation is alpine tundra in the vicinity of Mountain View Crest and sub-alpine forest on the slopes of the Animas River Gorge and Needle Creek Canyon. The only imprint of man within the unit is a short stretch of way (about 1/2 mile) in the southeastern corner of the unit. This way consists of twin vehicle tracks which are no longer accessible to motor vehicles. The way is substantially unnoticeable and does not impair the naturalness of the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

This unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude due to the rugged topography of the Animas Gorge and Mountain View Crest and the vegetative screening provided by the sub-alpine forest. The large amount of contiguous National Forest Wilderness and recommended wilderness greatly enhances opportunities for solitude within this area.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

This unit provides outstanding opportunities for a number of primitive and unconfined types of recreation. The rugged mountain terrain provides challenging hiking and cross-country skiing opportunities. Excellent trout fishing is available in the alpine lakes and streams. The highly scenic mountain landscape enhances these recreation opportunities and others such as hunting, horseback riding, and photography. The large amount of contiguous National Forest wilderness and recommended wilderness enhances the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within this area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

There are outstanding panoramic vistas from the top of Mountain View Crest taking in portions of the Animas River Gorge and the surrounding mountain landscape including the spectacular Needle Mountains. The area is geologically interesting because of the exposed interface between granitic and sedimentary strata and the visible effects of past glaciation.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There is only one imprint of man within the unit and it does not require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

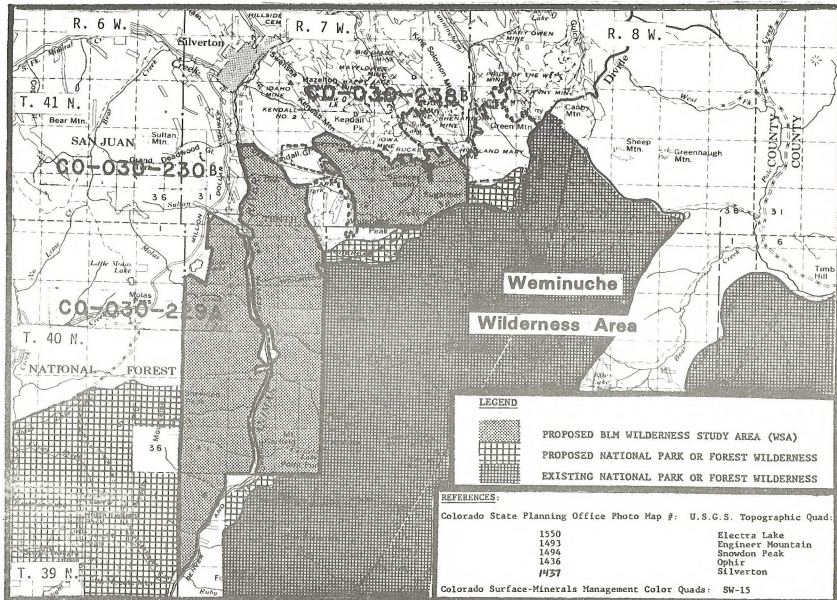
In combination with contiguous National Forest lands which have been designated as wilderness or recommended for wilderness designation, Unit CO-030-229B is of sufficient size to be preserved and used in an unimpaired condition. It is natural in character with no significant imprints of man. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are available in the unit due to the scenic, rugged mountain terrain and contiguous wilderness lands. The unit also contains scenic and geologic supplemental values. It meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act;
Montrose District

1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile



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Recommended as a U.S.A.
Unit No. CO-030-229A

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 5,820 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-229A
Area Name West Needles Contiguous

GENERAL LOCATION: About four miles south of Silverton (San Juan County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After boundary adjustments, approximately 5,820 acres of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management are contained within this unit, making it of sufficient size to preserve and use in an unimpaired condition. During the intensive inventory, the following boundary adjustments were made to exclude public lands with major imprints of man and private lands. In the eastern and southeastern portions of the unit, approximately 80 acres have been deleted to omit a Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad right-of-way and to exclude mining, exploration, roads, and buildings on unpatented mining claims. In the northwestern portion of the unit, about 20 acres of public land has been excluded where an access road to a patented mining claim substantially impaired naturalness. The unit lies mostly within the Animas River Canyon and is separated from units CO-030-229B and CO-030-230B by the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad. Also, the unit is contiguous to the 15,650-acre West Needles RARE II Area (#A303) which is recommended by the Forest Service for wilderness designation. Land outside the unit boundaries is a mixture of private, public and National Forest lands. Portions of the unit are leased for grazing and it contains several unpatented mining claims.

NATURALNESS:

The unit lies mostly within the steeply forested Animas River Canyon and encompasses portions of the Animas River. An eastern extension of the West Needle Mountains is within the unit, including the flank of Snowdon Peak. Meadows of gently-rolling to nearly flat topography are found in the northern portion of the unit below Molas Lake and above the Animas Gorge. Vegetation includes alpine tundra, spruce and aspen forests, and riparian communities. There is about 1/2 mile of way within the unit. This way is maintained solely by the passage of vehicles and does not significantly impair the area's naturalness. Unit CO-030-229A is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

That portion of Animas Gorge within the unit is densely forested with steep, narrow side drainages. Above the Animas Gorge, there is the rugged mountain terrain around Snowdon Peak. In addition, this unit is adjacent to the Forest Service RARE II Area #A303 which contains 15,650 acres of mountains, valleys and forest. The combination of topographic and vegetative screening within a large area of contiguous wildlands provides for outstanding opportunities for solitude in Unit CO-030-229A.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present in the West Needles Contiguous unit due to a combination of several factors. The large acreage of federal lands being managed for wilderness values, the rugged mountain landscape, the spruce and aspen forest, the narrow side canyons with cascading creeks, and the Animas River provide for diverse and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation such as hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, mountain climbing and cross-country skiing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The high scenic quality of the rugged, unspoiled mountain terrain within and adjacent to the unit is considered a supplemental value.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are no imprints of man within the unit that require rehabilitation.

RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDING AS A U.S.A.:

West Needles Contiguous inventory unit consists of 5,820 acres of public lands which are adjacent to the San Juan National Forest RARE II West Needles Area (15,650 acres) that is recommended for wilderness and that is being managed for wilderness values. The combined public lands and forest lands form a large area (21,470 acres) of undeveloped federal land that is natural in character. The size (5,820 acres) and location (within the Animas River Canyon) of the unit are sufficient to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. The unit offers outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. There are outstanding scenic values of mountain landscapes within and adjoining the inventory unit that are considered a supplemental value. This unit meets all the criteria of a Wilderness Study Area.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 5,640 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-230B
Area Name Whitehead Gulch

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to San Juan National Forest, about five miles south of Silverton (San Juan County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit consists of approximately 5,640 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. It has resulted from the combination of Unit CO-030-230A with portions of Unit CO-030-230. These units, originally separated by an administrative boundary (Gunnison Basin Special Project Area boundary), have been combined into one unit. There have been two boundary adjustments in Unit CO-030-230B as a result of intensive inventory review. Approximately 480 acres have been deleted from the northeastern portion of the unit because of evidence of past mining activity which impairs the naturalness of the area. Also, this portion of the unit contained several patented mining claims which tended to divide and isolate the public lands found there. About 400 acres of National Forest land previously included in the northeastern portion of the unit have been deleted. Portions of the Whitehead Gulch Unit are leased for grazing and it contains some unpatented mining claims. Portions of the area have been withdrawn for a powersite reserve. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public land administered by the BLM, National Forest land and private land. It is contiguous with the 401,410-acre Weninuche Wilderness and RARE II Areas #A297 (460 acres) and #A296 (380 acres) which have been recommended by the U.S. Forest Service for wilderness designation, though it is of sufficient size by itself to be managed for wilderness values.

NATURALNESS:

The unit lies mostly within the steeply forested Animas River Canyon and encompasses portions of the Animas River. A western extension of the Grenadier Range, including Mount Garfield, is within the unit. There are park-like areas along the Animas River, the most notable being Elk Park. Vegetation includes alpine tundra, spruce and aspen forests, and riparian communities of willow, raspberry and sedges. Imprints of man within the unit consist of two ways and some evidence of past mining activity which are not substantially noticeable. The unit is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The combination of topographic and vegetative screening in the rugged and densely forested Animas Gorge provides for outstanding opportunities for solitude within this area. In addition, this unit and adjacent areas that are either wilderness or proposed wilderness, create a total of 407,990 acres of land that provide numerous outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present in the Whitehead Gulch Unit due to a combination of several factors. The large acreage of contiguous federal lands being managed for wilderness values, the mountain landscape with high peaks and basins containing alpine streams and lakes, the spruce and aspen forests, the narrow side canyons with creeks that cascade down into the Animas River Gorge, the existing hiking and riding trail in Elk Creek, the open tundra ridges and basins that enable cross-country travel, and the Animas River which offers fishing and kayaking on its waters, provide for diverse and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The outstanding scenic quality of this rugged mountain area is considered a supplemental value.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are no imprints of man within this unit that require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Whitehead Gulch Unit is 5,640 acres of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. It is of sufficient size, by itself, to be managed for wilderness values; in addition, it is contiguous with 402,250 acres of National Forest lands being managed for wilderness values. Within the inventory unit and adjoining lands, there are outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The land within the unit is primarily natural in character with only a few minor imprints of man in the form of ways and past mining activity. Within and adjoining the unit there are outstanding scenic values of river canyons and mountain landscapes. This unit meets all the criteria of a Wilderness Study Area.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 2,240 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-2388
Area name Weminuche Contiguous

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to San Juan National Forest, five miles southwest of Silverton, and four miles south of Howardsville (San Juan County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit consists of approximately 2,240 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. It is the result of combining Units CO-030-238A, CO-030-238 and portions of Unit CO-030-230. These units were originally separated by an administrative boundary, but were contiguous without real "on-the-ground" divisions; thus, they have been consolidated into one unit. As a result of intensive inventory review, there have been several boundary adjustments in Unit CO-030-2388. Approximately 1,360 acres of National Forest land have been deleted from the southern and western portions of the unit. 480 acres have been deleted due to the presence of imprints of man from mining and mineral exploration activity (ways, adits, shafts, pits). Two areas that had narrow configurations and contained imprints of man from past mining activity were deleted from the unit (a total of 520 acres) due to the lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. Portions of Unit CO-030-2388 are leased for grazing, and it contains some unpatented mining claims. Approximately 640 acres within the unit are patented mineral rights the State of Colorado. The area is surrounded by a mixture of private land, BLM-administered public lands and National Forest lands. Unit CO-030-2388 is contiguous to the 401,400-acre Weminuche Wilderness and USFS RARE II Areas #A297, Whitehead Peak (460 acres), and #A298, Cunningham Creek (440 acres) which have been recommended by the U.S. Forest Service for wilderness designation. In conjunction with contiguous lands, this unit is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.

NATURALNESS:

The unit consists of high peaks and alpine and sub-alpine meadows and ridges between 10,800 feet and 13,434 feet. Small portions of the unit support a spruce forest, while the remaining area is rocky and supports alpine tundra of grasses and wildflowers. There are numerous running streams with cascading waterfalls. These form drainage patterns that radiate from Kendall Peak, Whitehead Peak and Sugarloaf. The unit has several miles of hiking and riding trails. Imprints of man are from ways and past mining activity. The way into Spencer Basin is mostly a two-wheel track with some construction that has a low impact on naturalness. There are about 12 exploration pits within Spencer Basin and 20 others scattered throughout the unit. These are about five feet across with the removed material piled next to the pit. The imprints of man within this unit are minor and do not impair the naturalness of the area. The Weminuche Contiguous Unit is affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The unit consists of 2,240 acres of a mountain landscape with rugged drainages, peaks and ridges. Topographic relief provides for outstanding opportunities for solitude within the unit. The large acreage of adjacent Forest Service lands being managed for wilderness values greatly enhances opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The majority of the unit is characterized by alpine tundra which allows unconfined movement for cross-country travel. This, in combination with existing hiking trails and the high scenic quality of the area, provides for outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation activities such as hiking, horseback riding, mountain climbing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, photography or sightseeing. These opportunities are greatly enhanced with the contiguous USFS lands being managed for wilderness values.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

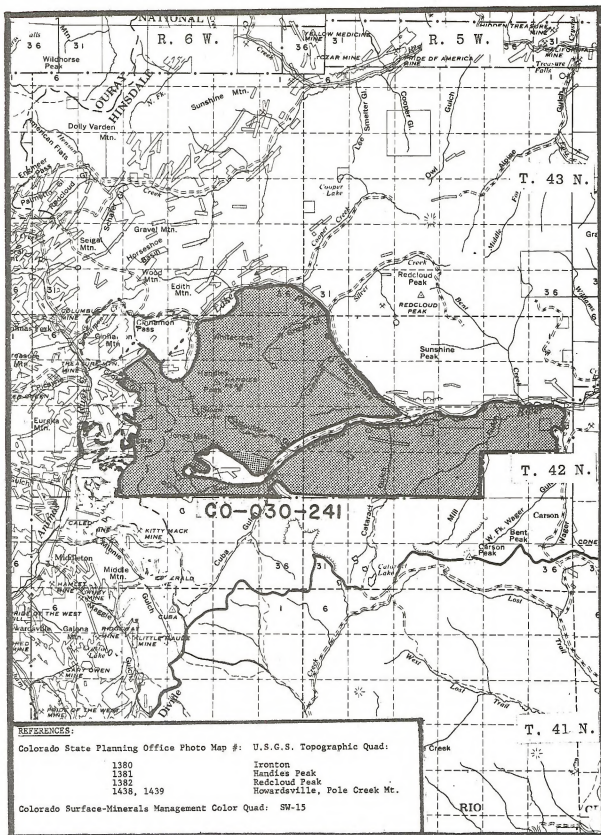
The scenic quality of the area is outstanding with alpine basins, lakes and several 13,000-foot plus mountain peaks. Much of this area is alpine tundra with numerous wildflowers. Several cold, clear trout streams flow through the area. Wide panoramic views of the surrounding mountains can be seen from within this unit. The area also contains ecological interest due to the presence of the Altain Scavort (*Stellaria irrigua*), which is proposed endangered on the Federal Register List of Endangered and Threatened Plants.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

No portions of this unit require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit, consisting of 2,240 acres of public lands, is contiguous to the 401,400-acre Weminuche Wilderness and two RARE II Areas recommended for wilderness designation, thus meeting size requirements for a W.S.A. This area is primarily natural in character with man's imprints being substantially unnoticeable. The area's mountain terrain and scenic values provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. Also, the high scenic quality of the area is considered a supplemental value. This unit meets the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 15,780 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-241
Area Name Handies Peak

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast of Silverton (San Juan - Hinsdale Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the Summer of 1978. The intensive inventory boundary contained 20,720 acres. After public comment and field evaluation, boundary adjustments were made which deleted 1,160 acres for unnaturalness due to past mining activity and 1,340 acres not offering outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation due to irregular boundaries and private inholdings. National Forest lands (2,440 acres) which were previously included in the unit were also deleted. There are approximately 140 acres of private land inholdings (patented mining claims) within the unit. The unit also contains unpatented mining claims and portions leased for grazing. The unit is surrounded by private, BLM public lands and National Forest lands.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is a rugged area of high mountains and steep drainages. Many of the peaks are over 13,000 feet; the highest being Handies Peak at 14,048 feet. The area also contains alpine lakes within natural amphitheaters and perennial creeks flowing over steep embankments forming waterfalls. The drainages support dense forests of sub-alpine fir. Aspens cover the lower slopes of the mountains. Vast meadows of alpine tundra blanket the higher elevations and constitute a majority of the area. After boundary adjustments, the unit is primarily natural in character with only minor imprints of man remaining. A few shepherd camps are located in the upper portion of Grizzly Creek, but are substantially unnoticeable. A number of abandoned ways follow the drainages within the unit, but are undriveable and are returning to a natural condition. Most are used as hiking or pack trails.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The large size of the area (15,780 acres) with numerous remote drainages descending from 13,000-foot plus peaks, combined with the feeling of vastness created by the surrounding mountainous terrain, provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. In the drainages and lower slopes of the mountains, vegetative screening provides privacy and seclusion contributing to opportunities for solitude. Natural amphitheaters formed by glacial cirques in the higher elevations offer enclosed areas which enhance the outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The large size of the unit and its varied topography consisting of steep drainages, open parks of alpine tundra, and high mountain peaks provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation activities such as hiking, backpacking, mountain climbing, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and sightseeing. In addition, the high scenic quality of the unit enhances the primitive, unconfined recreation opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

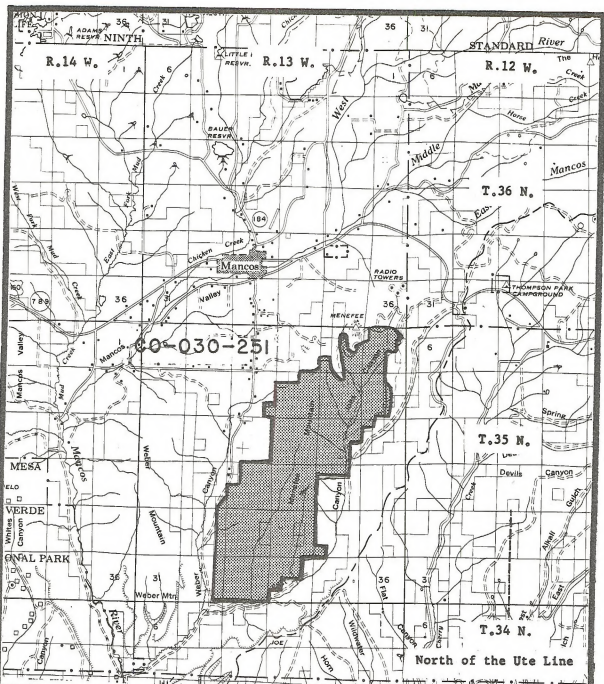
The scenic quality of the area is outstanding due to the rugged mountain landscape with numerous 13,000-foot plus peaks, glacial features and vegetative patterns.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are only minor imprints of man within the unit which do not require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Handies Peak unit contains a large acreage (15,780 acres) that is primarily natural in character. The rugged topography of the higher elevations, in addition with dense vegetation along the drainages and slopes, provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation. The high peaks and scenic quality of the unit add supplemental value. The unit meets all the criteria of a Wilderness Study Area.



REFERENCES:

Colorado State Planning Photo Map #: U.S.C.S. Topographic Quad:

1659	Point Lookout
1715	Wecherill Mesa
1716	Moccasin Mesa
1660	Mancos
	Thompson Park
	Trail Canyon

Colorado Surface-Minerals Management Color Quad: SW-20



1/2 1 2 3 4

1/2 in. = 1 Mile

102

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 7,360 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-251
Area Name Menefee Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: Twenty-one miles west of Durango (Montezuma County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After BLM initial inventory field examination, adjustments were made to exclude unnatural portions in the north of the unit. The final initial inventory boundary contained 7,360 acres. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the final initial inventory. The unit is of sufficient acreage to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. There is one non-public land inholding of about 40 acres contained within the unit, but it is not considered in the unit acreage nor has it been inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The entire area has been leased for oil and gas; portions for coal. In addition, the unit is leased for grazing. The unit is bounded by a mixture of public and private lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Menefee Mountain unit includes a mountain and associated canyon topography. The unit is primarily natural in character and contains a number of physical features such as vertically-walled canyons, overhanging cliffs, and varied plant communities. Pinyon-juniper and various mountain shrubs constitute the primary vegetation. At higher elevations the pinyon-juniper gives way to oakbrush which becomes the dominant species above 7,000 feet. Scattered stands of ponderosa pine and Douglas fir can also be found associated with the oak habitat. After initial inventory boundary changes were made to exclude an area of high human impact to the north, only minor imprints remain within the unit. Most of these imprints are ways in the northern portion of the unit and within East Canyon. All imprints are returning to a natural condition and are effectively screened by vegetation and topography. The area is affected primarily by the forces of nature with man's imprint substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Because of the rugged topography and the vegetative screening inherent to pinyon-juniper and oakbrush habitats, this unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude. The presence of numerous canyons and the lack of a distinct focal point within the unit tends to disperse use, also contributing to opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The rugged terrain of the unit--steep-sided canyons and cliff-rimmed mesa tops--provides challenging hiking, backpacking and climbing opportunities. From the top of Menefee Mountain there are panoramic vistas which take in several surrounding mountain ranges and a series of plateaus. These scenic vistas provide opportunities for sightseeing and photography and enhance the other recreation opportunities available in the unit. The Menefee Mountain unit does provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

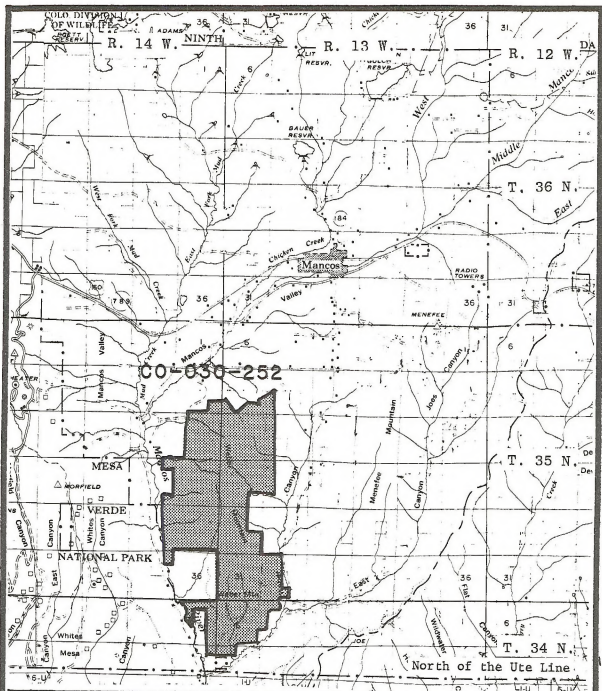
The Menefee Mountain unit has a number of supplemental values which enhance its wilderness quality. The unit includes several significant archeological sites. Its physical features provide educational as well as scenic value. A variety of wildlife inhabit the area including six pairs of golden eagles and two pair of bald eagles during the winter. The area also contains habitat suitable for a number of proposed endangered plants.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Imprints within the unit are minor and do not require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Menefee Mountain unit is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. It has outstanding opportunities or both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation as well as several supplemental values which enhance its wilderness quality. The intensive inventory revealed that the unit does meet the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



REFERENCES:

Colorado State Planning Office Photo Map #: U.S.G.S. Topographic Quad:

1659	Point Lookout
1715	Werherill Mesa
1716	Moccasin Mesa
1660	Manos
	Trail Canyon

Colorado Surface-Minerals Management Color Quad: SW-20



104

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 6,320 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-252
Area Name Weber Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: Twenty-four miles west of Durango (Montezuma County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After BLM evaluation during the initial inventory, adjustments were made to exclude unnatural portions in the north of the unit. The final initial inventory boundary contained 6,320 acres. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the final initial inventory. This unit is of sufficient acreage to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. All the lands within the unit are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. It is surrounded by a mixture of public and private lands. Grazing leases exist within the unit as well as some oil and gas leases.

NATURALNESS:

The unit consists of numerous small canyons radiating from a somewhat linear-shaped mountain. Along the slopes of the mountain and within the canyons, exposed sandstone rock, forms overhangs and vertical cliffs. The vegetation consists primarily of pinyon/juniper with park-like areas of sagebrush interspersed throughout, and some conifers and scrub oak near the top of the mountain. The unit is pristine in character with only one minor imprint within its boundaries. An old, dry reservoir can be found in the center of the unit, but it is revegetated and returning to a natural condition. The area is primarily affected by the forces of nature and is free of any substantial imprint of man.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the rugged topography of Weber Mountain and its associated drainages and vegetative screening provided by dense stands of pinyon/juniper and scrub oak, Unit No. CO-030-252 possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude. The general configuration of the mountain and the limited access into the unit provide a sense of remoteness and seclusion which contributes to feelings of solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Weber Mountain Unit possesses outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Its rugged terrain provides hardy challenges to the hiker and climber. Supplemental values within the unit such as panoramic vantage points, wildlife and archaeological sites could enhance the various recreation opportunities. Lack of water in the unit could be a limiting factor, yet a number of recreational activities could still be pursued. The unit is especially suited for hiking, climbing, exploring, photography, wildlife observation, hunting and general sightseeing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

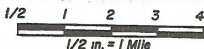
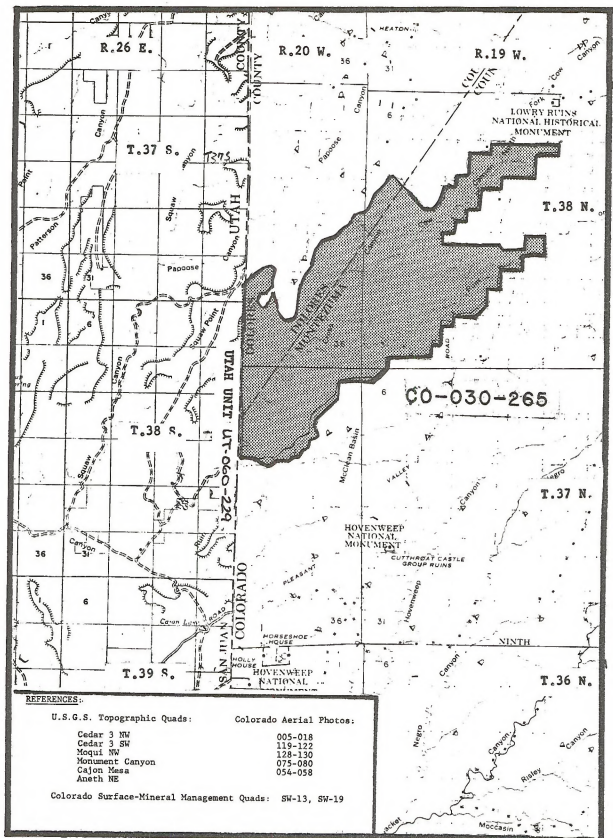
The area is rich in archaeological resources and a number of significant sites have been located.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Only one minor imprint was found within the unit and it does not require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Weber Mountain Inventory Unit is of sufficient size (6,320 acres) to be managed as wilderness. No significant imprints of man are contained within the unit; it is affected primarily by the forces of nature. It contains outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, due to the rugged canyon and mesa terrain and dense pinyon/juniper and scrub oak vegetation. It meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 9,160 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-265
Area Name Cross Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 14 miles southwest of Cahone (Dolores - Montezuma Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After BLM field evaluation, adjustments were made in the initial inventory boundaries; the final initial inventory unit contained 9,160 acres of public land with no non-public land inholdings. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as those for the final initial inventory. This unit is contiguous with Utah BLM inventory unit No. UT-060-229, which is being intensively inventoried. These units will be combined during the intensive inventory and treated as one unit. The decision on whether or not the combined unit will be designated as a WSA will be made by September, 1980, when both states have completed their inventories and public comment periods. All of unit CO-030-265 is leased for grazing and oil and gas resources. There are no patented mining claims within the unit but there are numerous unpatented mining claims. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public and private lands.

NATURALNESS:

Unit CO-030-265 consists of portions of several canyons, including Cross, Ruin and Cow Canyons, that have been cut by fluvial erosion through an uplifted sedimentary bed. Numerous rock outcrops, ledges and cliffs are exposed in the canyons that range in depth from 850 feet to 340 feet. In addition to the main canyons, there are numerous smaller tributary canyons. Pinyon/juniper woodland is the dominant vegetative cover with cottonwoods in places along the canyon bottom. Imprints of man within the unit include old ways and revegetated drill pads. The ways are not maintained and are (along with the drill pads) returning to a natural condition through the processes of erosion and revegetation. Most of these imprints are screened by vegetation and topography. This unit is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The rugged canyons with their narrow, steep inner gorges and numerous side canyons clad in dense pinyon/juniper woodland provide excellent topographic and vegetative screening. The canyon bottom has a riparian zone which supports a mixture of cottonwood, willow, tamarisk, boxelder and shrubs. The enclosed nature of the canyon system provides a feeling of intimacy which enhances opportunities for solitude. The combination of topographic and vegetative screening provides for outstanding opportunities for solitude within this unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Cross Canyon Unit offers a variety of primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities such as hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, hunting and photography. The canyon bottoms within the unit provide foot or horseback routes and numerous secluded camping sites. More challenging cross-country routes can be found on the canyon slopes and walls. From the mesa or cliff top, there are scenic panoramas of the Cross Canyon Unit and surrounding areas. This area provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

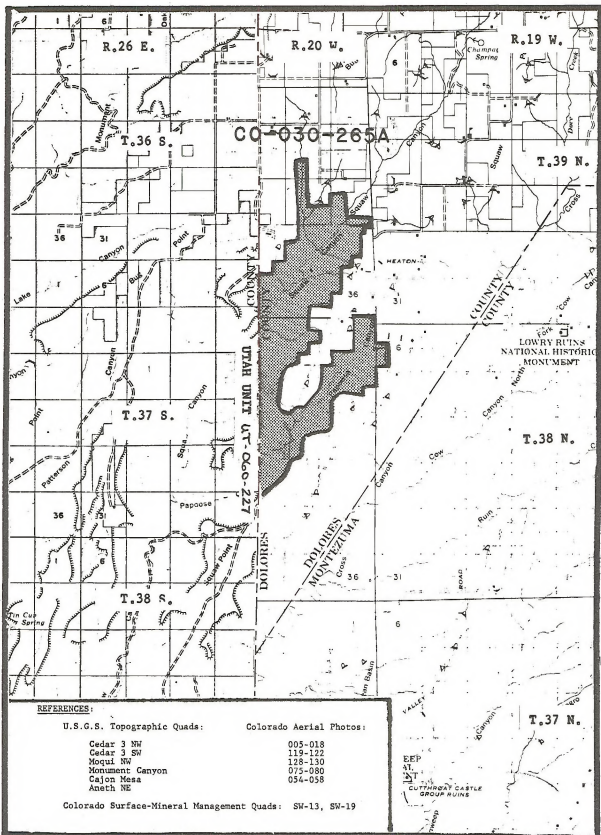
This unit contains several supplemental values. The Dakota Sandstone and Morrison Formation are exposed by erosion within the area and provide an opportunity to study the stratigraphy of the Jurassic and Upper Cretaceous Periods. The Morrison Formation contains fossil wood and plant remains, as well as fossil vertebrate bones. Ecologically, this unit is significant as an undisturbed refuge for indigenous flora and fauna in a region that has been greatly modified by agriculture. This unit also contains abundant archeological sites including numerous Anasazi ruin sites.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Imprints of man within the unit are minor and do not require active rehabilitation.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit is of sufficient size (9,160 acres) to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. It is primarily natural in character with no significant imprints of man. The rugged and scenic canyon system provides outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, the unit contains geological, ecological and archeological supplemental values. This area meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 mile

108

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 5,320 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-265A
Area Name Squaw/Papoose Canyons

GENERAL LOCATION: Twelve miles southwest of Dove Creek (Dolores County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After field evaluation, adjustments were made in the initial inventory boundaries; the final initial inventory unit contained 5,320 acres of public lands with no non-public land inholdings. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as those for final initial inventory. This unit is contiguous with Utah BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit No. UT-060-227, which is currently being intensively inventoried. These units will be combined during the intensive inventory and treated as one unit. The decision on whether or not the combined unit will be designated as a WSA will be made by September, 1980, when both states have completed their inventories and public comment periods. All of unit CO-030-265A is leased for grazing and oil and gas resources, and the area contains some unpatented mining claims. This unit is surrounded by a mixture of public and private land.

NATURALNESS:

This unit consists primarily of two canyons (Squaw and Papoose) that have been cut by fluvial erosion into an uplifted sedimentary bed composed of the Morrison Formation and Dakota Sandstone. Due to the arid nature of this area, the canyon slopes are composed of exposed rock outcrops and steep talus slopes. Numerous tributary canyons merge juniper with an associated shrub understory of sagebrush, Mormon tea, mountain mahogany, rabbitbrush, cliffrose and bitterbrush. Vegetation is thicker along the canyon floors with a mixture of cottonwood, tamarisk, saltbrush, sedges, rushes and cattails. Within Squaw Canyon there is 1/2 mile of way that is returning to a natural condition through revegetation. The only other imprint of man within the unit is a swath cleared through the pinyon/juniper to allow oil and gas exploration. This swath is revegetating and is well-screened by the dense surrounding pinyon/juniper forest. Unit CO-030-265A is primarily natural in character with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The rugged topography of the steep, winding canyons (Squaw, Papoose) provides topographic screening within this unit. Steep inclines and ledges limit accessibility and the meandering stream course provides natural visual barriers. Vegetative screening is provided by the pinyon/juniper on the canyon slopes and by the riparian growth in the canyon bottom. Outstanding opportunities for solitude are available within this unit due to this combination of vegetative and topographic screening.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Some of the primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities available in this unit are hiking, backpacking, hunting, rock climbing, horseback riding and photography. The secluded canyon bottoms make good hiking or riding paths, while the canyon slopes and walls provide more challenging routes for hiking and rock climbing. The rugged and scenic terrain, diverse wildlife and archeological sites enhance the recreation opportunities available here. This unit provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The stratigraphy of the Dakota Sandstone and Morrison Formation, as exposed within this unit, reveal the historic geologic processes of portions of the Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods. In addition, the Morrison Formation is rich in fossil plants and vertebrates. Ecologically, this unit serves as a natural refuge for native flora and fauna which have been displaced from surrounding areas by agriculture and other human activity. The rich archeological resource in this unit, including lithic sites, masonry dwellings and food storage structures dating from the Anasazi culture, is another supplemental value.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are only minor imprints of man within this unit that do not require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit is of sufficient size (5,320 acres) to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. It is primarily natural in character with only minor imprints of man. The rugged and scenic topography of the steep, winding canyons provides for outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, the area contains geological, ecological and archeological supplemental values. This unit meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,385 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-2650
Area Name Cahone Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately three miles west of Cahone (Ooloes - Montezuma Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After BLM field evaluation, adjustments were made in the initial inventory boundaries which resulted in unit CO-030-265 being split into two units--265 and 2650. The final initial inventory boundaries for Unit CO-030-2650 contained 8,385 acres of public land with no private inholdings. The intensive inventory boundaries remain the same as those for the final initial inventory. The entire unit is leased for grazing and oil and gas resources. It contains several unpatented mining claims. This unit is surrounded by a mixture of public and private land.

NATURALNESS:

The dominating natural feature of this unit is the confluence of three deep canyons--Cross, Cahone and Dove Creek--that have been cut by fluvial erosion into the Morrison Formation and Dakota Sandstone. The steep canyon walls consist of shallow, rocky soils, numerous rock outcrops, and talus slopes. Sandstone cliffs and ledges line the canyon rims. The winding canyon bottoms have a gentle to moderate juniper woodland with a shrub understory. The canyon bottoms support growths of cottonwood, boxelder, Russian olive, willow and tamarisk along with various shrubs. The only imprint of man within the unit are two ways, one on the southern rim of Cahone Canyon, and one on the northern rim. These ways are revegetating and are screened by the surrounding piñon/juniper woodland. They do not significantly impair the naturalness of the area. This unit is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The rugged terrain of the deep, winding canyons with numerous rock outcrops and boulder-strewn slopes provides excellent topographic screening. The dense cover of the piñon/juniper on the slopes and canyon rims and the riparian growth in the canyon bottoms provides vegetative screening. This combination of vegetative and topographic screening provides outstanding opportunities for solitude in Unit CO-030-2650.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The deep, rugged canyons of this unit provide a scenic backdrop for various recreation activities including hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, hunting, photography and sightseeing for the area's geological and archeological features. The canyon bottoms can be used as hiking or riding routes and provide numerous secluded camping spots. The steep canyon slopes and ledges would provide more challenging cross-country hiking or rock climbing opportunities. Hunting is an historical and continuing use of this area. The archeological, geological and scenic values of the area would enhance the recreation opportunities available here. This unit does provide outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The stratigraphy of the Dakota Sandstone and Morrison Formation, as exposed within this unit, reveal the historic-geologic processes of portions of the Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods. In addition, the Morrison Formation is rich in fossil plants and vertebrates. Ecologically, this unit serves as a natural refuge for native flora and fauna which have been displaced from surrounding areas by agriculture and other human activity. The rich archeological resource in this unit, including lithic sites, masonry dwellings and food storage structure dating from the Anasazi culture, is another supplemental value.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are only minor imprints of man within this unit that do not require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit is of sufficient size (8,385 acres) to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. It is primarily natural in character with only minor imprints of man. The rugged and scenic topography of the steep, winding canyons provides for outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, the area contains geological, ecological and archeological supplemental values. This unit meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 22,500 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-286
Area Name McKenna Peak

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast of Dove Creek (San Miguel - Dolores Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After BLM field evaluation, adjustments were made in the initial inventory; the final initial inventory boundary contained 44,060 acres. After intensive inventory boundary adjustments, this unit consists of 22,500 acres of public land administered by the BLM. Approximately 21,550 acres of land that were included in the initial inventory have been deleted as a result of the intensive inventory. These areas which were located primarily on the western side of the unit were found to contain significant imprints of man and to lack outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, due to the spacial configuration of the area and the open nature of the terrain and vegetation. The remaining acreage is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. Portions of the area are leased for oil, gas and grazing. The area is surrounded by a mixture of private, State and BLM public lands.

NATURALNESS:

The geomorphology of the area is dominated by shale/adobe badlands topography, and includes sandstone cliffs, canyons, and rolling hills. Vegetation varies from desert forbs and grasses to dense coniferous forests. Imprints of man in the McKenna Peak inventory unit are not substantially noticeable and are either mitigated by topographic and vegetative screening, or both. In addition, it should be noted that the cumulative impacts of the ways and range improvements upon the unit's naturalness is negligible because the few imprints present are widely dispersed and do not dominate the landscape. The McKenna Peak Unit, then, is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The outstanding opportunities for solitude in the McKenna Peak Unit are a function of the topographic and vegetative screening in the area. The badlands near McKenna Peak and Brunley Point contain deep, narrow, twisting arroyos. From high points in the unit there are expansive vistas which give a feeling of vastness to the area. Dense piñon/juniper woodland and rock outcrops provide screening in the northern part of Spring Creek Basin.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The diverse topography of the McKenna Peak Unit, including "badlands", steep sandstone cliffs, and gently rolling mesas in combination with varied vegetation provides for outstanding primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities. Some of the recreation activities available in the area include horseback riding, hiking, rock climbing, backpacking, hunting, photography and sightseeing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

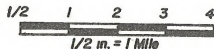
The McKenna Peak Unit possesses several supplemental values which enhance its wilderness quality. Much of the area consists of highly eroded, exposed sedimentary strata which illustrates the geologic processes and history of the area. Numerous fossil marine invertebrates can be found in portions of the unit. The McKenna Peak area provides habitat for a wild horse herd. The unit contains scenic values due to the unusual geomorphology of the area and the unspoiled scenic vistas of surrounding areas.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

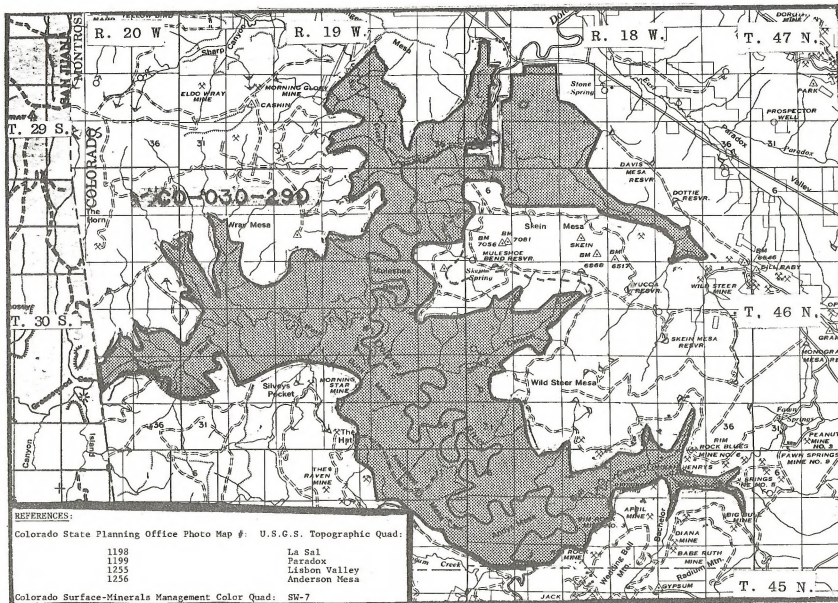
The imprints of man within the unit are minor and do not require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The McKenna Peak Unit consists of 22,500 acres of public land which are primarily natural in character. The scenic and diverse topography and vegetation of the unit provide outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, the unit contains several supplemental values (geologic and ecological) which enhance its wilderness characteristics. The unit meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 29,601 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-290
Area Name Dolores River Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: In southwest Colorado, approximately 17 miles west of Naturita and two miles south of State Highway 90 (Montrose - San Miguel Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

As a result of BLM field evaluation, adjustments were made in the initial inventory boundaries; the final initial inventory unit contained 31,585 acres of public land with no non-public land inholdings. Approximately 1,984 acres have been deleted from the western part of the unit, just south of Skein Mesa, to exclude an area which contains a road, ways and mineral exploration activity. With the exception of this one deletion, the intensive inventory boundaries are the same as those for the final initial inventory. After intensive inventory boundary adjustments, the unit consists of 29,601 acres of public land. Lying within an area that has had extensive uranium exploration and development, the boundary has been drawn to exclude these significant imprints of man. All lands within the unit are leased for oil and gas development and most of the area is leased for grazing. Although no patented mining claims exist within the unit, there are some unpatented mining claims. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public and private land. It is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.

NATURALNESS:

This unit centers on the deeply-incised, meandering Dolores River Canyon and includes those tributary canyons and surrounding rangelands that are primarily natural in character. This rugged canyon system is cut down through a series of sedimentary strata resulting in many colorful ledges and massive cliffs interspersed with talus slopes. Approximately 30 miles of the Dolores River are included within the unit. Vegetation varies with terrain and elevation. The rim and mesa area support a pinyon/juniper woodland with occasional sage plants. On the canyon slopes, there is a mixture of desert shrubs such as sagebrush, Mormon tea, squabush, and buffalo berry, and scattered pinyon/juniper, cottonwoods and an occasional ponderosa pine just under the canyon rim. The bottom of the main canyon and some of the tributary canyons support a thicker riparian growth. Imprints of man consist primarily of ways that are not maintained and which do not significantly impair the naturalness of the unit. Unit CO-030-290 has been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work being substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

This unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude, primarily because of the extensive topographic screening provided by the deep, narrow canyon system. Vegetative screening is prominent on the mesa tops and in areas where a thick growth of pinyon/juniper trees provides opportunities for solitude. The intimate nature of the canyons and the vast vistas from the rim areas supplement the outstanding opportunities of solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

During the spring runoff, the Dolores River provides a scenic whitewater river run. Throughout the year, the rugged canyon system offers opportunities for challenging cross-country hiking and backpacking, while numerous high cliffs provide outstanding rock climbing opportunities. Other recreation activities available within this unit include hunting, horseback riding, photography and sightseeing for geologic features. The highly scenic canyon system enhances all of the recreation activities available in this area. The Dolores River Canyon Unit provides outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

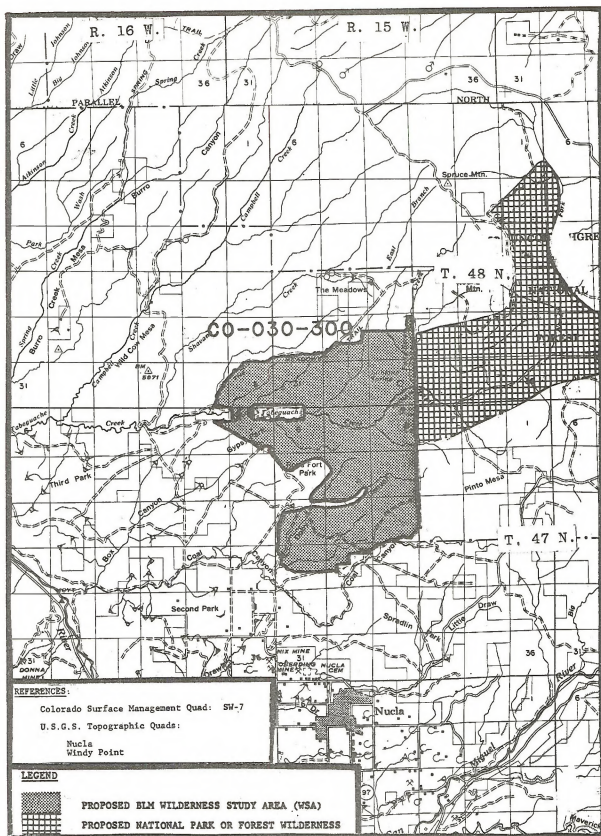
This unit contains a number of supplemental values including: Geologic/scenic values associated with the deeply entrenched, sheer-walled canyons and the exposed sedimentary strata; ecological values including several rare plants; and archeological and paleontological values. These supplemental values enhance the wilderness quality of the area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The imprints of man within the unit are not significant in the context of the unit as a whole. They do not require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Dolores River Canyon is a large area (29,601 acres) that is primarily natural in character. The deep main canyon and its tributaries are highly scenic and provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation such as rafting and backpacking. The area contains several supplemental values such as scenic, geological, archeological and paleontological resources which enhance its wilderness quality. The unit meets all criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603

Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,814 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-300
Area Name Tabeguache Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Three miles north of Nucla (Montrose County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the final initial inventory. The Tabeguache Creek Unit consists of 8,814 acres of public land administered by the BLM. Within the boundaries of the unit there is a 160-acre non-public land inholding which is not included in the unit acreage nor is it being inventoried for wilderness values. The entire unit is leased for grazing and portions are leased for oil and gas exploration. There are some unpatented mining claims within the unit. This unit is contiguous with the 10,240-acre Forest Service RARE II Area No. 242, which has been recommended for wilderness to Congress. Even without the contiguous RARE II Area, it is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.

NATURALNESS:

Centered on Tabeguache Creek and its deep canyon, this unit is characterized by ridges and mesas divided by rough tributary canyons. Except for the riparian zone along Tabeguache Creek, piñon/juniper woodland is the dominant vegetative cover. There are four ways within the unit. All are screened by topography and vegetation and none of them significantly impair the naturalness of the area.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are available in this unit due to the topographic screening provided by the winding, narrow Tabeguache Creek Canyon and the surrounding rugged benchlands and tributary canyons, which covers most of the area. Opportunities for solitude are enhanced by the contiguous RARE II Area which is a logical extension of the Tabeguache Creek Unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

There are a variety of primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities available in Unit No. CO-030-300. The scenic quality of Tabeguache Canyon, combined with the perennial stream provide outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking and horseback riding. The benchlands above the canyon offer more challenging travel routes. Hunting, photography and sightseeing for geological features are other recreation opportunities available throughout the unit. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are enhanced by the contiguous RARE II Area which contains the upper portion of Tabeguache Creek Canyon and is a natural extension of Unit CO-030-300.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

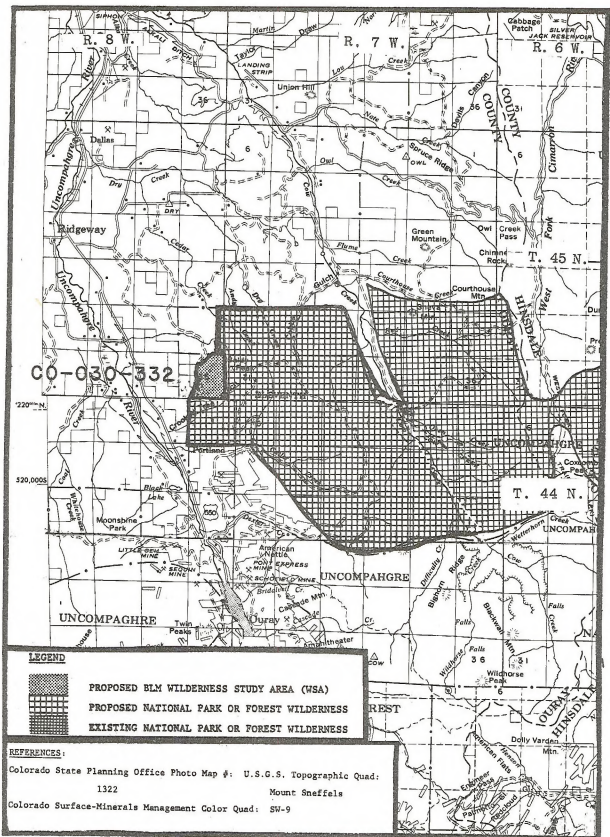
This unit contains geological supplemental values due to the deep cut Tabeguache Creek Canyon which has laid bare sedimentary strata covering approximately 100 million years of geologic history.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

None of the imprints of man within the unit require active rehabilitation.

RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Tabeguache Creek Unit is of sufficient size to be managed as wilderness. In addition, it is contiguous with Forest Service RARE II Area 242. These two areas together constitute a large area that is primarily natural in character. The rugged and scenic terrain of Tabeguache Creek Canyon and its surroundings provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude. The unit meets all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 400 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-332
Area Name Baldy Peak Contiguous

GENERAL LOCATION: Five miles north of Ouray (Ouray County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After BLM field evaluation, adjustments were made in the initial inventory boundaries to include 40 acres of public land adjacent to the southwestern boundary of the unit that were primarily natural in character. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as those for the final initial inventory. This unit consists of 400 acres of public land. Although not of sufficient size to be managed as wilderness on its own, in conjunction with a contiguous Forest Service RARE II Area (No. 228, Baldy Peak, 10,080 acres), the unit would meet the size requirements of a Wilderness Study Area. The entire unit is leased for grazing. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of Forest Service and BLM managed public land.

NATURALNESS:

This unit consists of the west-facing slope of Baldy Peak. The vegetation is primarily sub-alpine meadows with some aspen/spruce forests. The only imprint of man within the unit is a short stretch of wooden fence without wire. The area is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Unit No. CO-030-332, by itself, is not large enough to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. However, in conjunction with the contiguous Forest Service lands which have been recommended for wilderness, the unit could be said to provide such opportunities due to the large area of rugged peaks and canyons, much of which is covered with thick forest.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

On its own, this unit is too small to provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. However, in combination with adjacent Forest Service proposed wilderness lands, the area provides outstanding hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, hunting and other primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

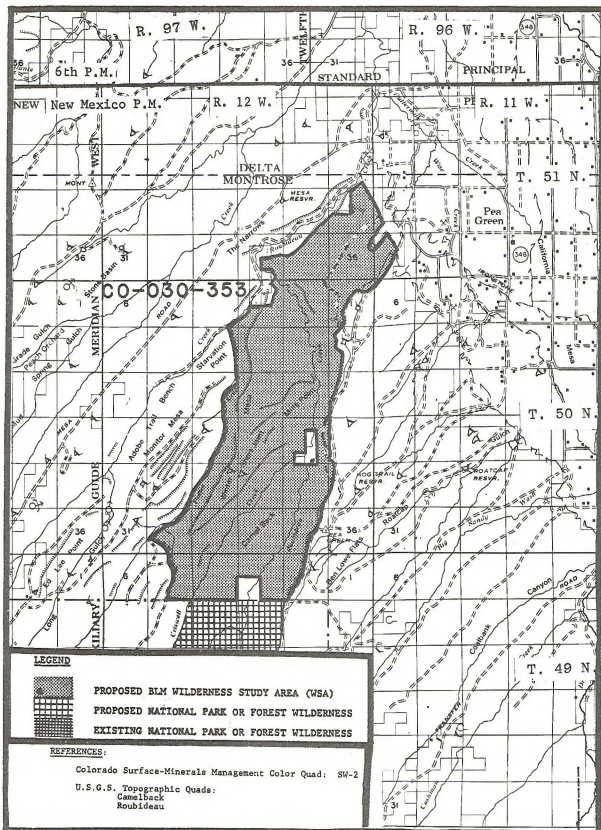
The unit contains no known supplemental values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

No portions of the area require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Unit CO-030-332, in conjunction with contiguous Forest Service RARE II lands that have been recommended for wilderness, is of sufficient size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. The rugged and scenic mountain terrain of the unit and contiguous Forest Service lands provide outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The unit meets the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

UNIT IDENTIFICATION

Size 13,943 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-353
Area Name Camel Back

GENERAL LOCATION: Southwest of Delta (Northwestern Montrose County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After boundary adjustments within the initial inventory, approximately 13,943 acres are contained within the unit (the intensive inventory boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the final initial inventory), making it of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. Approximately 610 acres of non-public land inholdings are contained within the unit but are not calculated in the unit's acreage or inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The unit is adjacent to the 19,770-acre RARE II Area (Roubideau, #241) proposed by the Forest Service for wilderness designation. Portions of the unit are leased for grazing. It is surrounded by a mixture of public, private and National Forest lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Camel Back unit is composed of a series of canyons and mesas sculptured by numerous intermittent streams. Its geologic structure is of mesozoic sandstones raised by the Uncompahgre Uplift which constitutes the present Uncompahgre Plateau. Vegetative patterns vary with topography. Along the streams, a riparian zone is apparent, including cottonwood, willow and tamarisk. Along the slopes of the canyon and on the mesas, semi-arid vegetation becomes typical. On top of the mesas and buttes, pinyon pine and juniper dominate the landscape. The unit is primarily affected by the forces of nature with the imprint of man being substantially unnoticeable. After initial inventory boundary adjustments were made in the east to exclude areas of chaining and contour furrowing and to the northwest to exclude part of the Winter Mesa trail that shows evidence of maintenance, only minor imprints remain. The few imprints are primarily ways along the East Rim and Winter Mesa. They are maintained merely by the passage of vehicles and are returning to a natural condition. Minor imprints can be found in the form of a few stock reservoirs along Winter Mesa Trail, but do not constitute a substantial impact upon the naturalness of the unit. Old juniper post fences can be found within the unit but are substantially unnoticeable due to color blending and vegetative screening. A mine shaft exists on the west side of Roubideau Canyon, but its impact is minimal due to vegetative and topographic screening.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude in the Camel Back Unit are outstanding due to a variety of factors. In the canyons, vegetative and topographic screening produce feelings of intimacy and isolation. Similar effects can be experienced in the thick stands of pinyon/juniper prevalent across the mesas. Where vegetation is sparse, the topography and size of the area promote feelings of solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Camel Back area offers outstanding opportunities for a variety of primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Its diversity of landscape enhances potential recreation activities. The canyons and gulches provide easy-to-moderate cross-country routes for hiking and horseback riding, while the steeper slopes of the mesas offer more challenging opportunities for hiking, as well as rock climbing. Vantage points from the rims of the mesas offer scenic views of the canyons and geological formations within the area providing outstanding opportunities for photography and sightseeing. The canyon streams have produced alluvial deposits that provide excellent secluded camping spots. In addition, the unit's adjacency to the Uncompahgre National Forest RARE II area enhances the recreation opportunities available in this area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Camel Back unit possesses several supplemental values such as unique flora, fauna, geological features and expansive vistas.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

No portions of the unit require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Camel Back Unit consists of 13,943 acres of public land -- sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. The rugged terrain of deep canyons and steep-sided mesas provide outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The unit has several supplemental values and it is contiguous to a RARE II area recommended for wilderness designation by the U.S. Forest Service. This unit meets the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.

Recommended as W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-030-370B

UNIT IDENTIFICATION

Size	10,720 acres	Inventory No.	CO-030-370B
District	Montrose	Area Name	Adobe Badlands

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Grand Mesa National Forest northwest of Delta (Delta County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit consists of 10,720 acres of public land with no non-public land inholdings. Originally, this unit was a portion of CO-030-370A. During the intensive inventory a vehicle route was determined to be a substantial impairment to naturalness, thus separating this area. Portions of the unit are leased for grazing and oil and gas. The unit is surrounded by National Forest, public and non-public lands.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is characterized by a combination of rugged, maize-like adobes of Mancos shale of varying pastel shades of color and relatively steep foothill slopes vegetated in pinyon/juniper. Man's imprints are generally unnoticeable. Some minor impacts in the form of vehicle ways, associated with hunting or grazing activities are substantially unnoticeable. In the vicinity of the Devil's Thumb, motorcycle activity has impaired the wilderness values. Under natural processes or hand labor, the area could return to its natural condition. The unit appears to retain its primeval character and influence.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The unit contains a wide variety and diversity of outstanding opportunities for solitude. The intricate maize-like badlands offer an intimacy which effectively screens visitors from the sights and sounds of one another. In addition, due to the upward sloping topography, the unit offers a feeling of vastness associated with the unobstructed vistas. The pinyon/juniper vegetation also tends to create a screening effect.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

A variety of factors enhance the outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The unit's relatively large size and topographic diversity add to the recreational opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

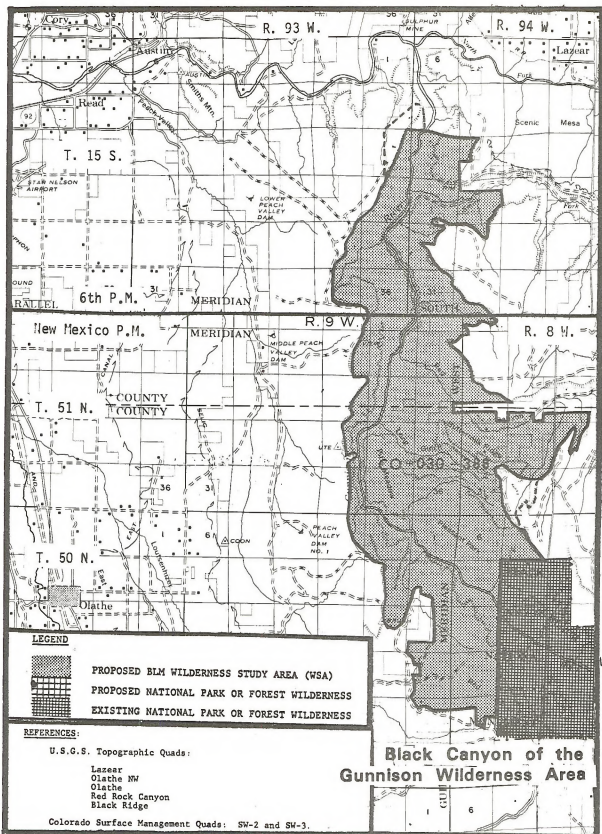
The unit, due to the unobstructed vistas, is high in scenic quality with views of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre Plateau and San Juan Mountains. In addition, the unit contains outstanding diversity of geologic features and a cactus which is on the "threatened" list.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

A portion of the unit would require rehabilitation. In the vicinity of the Devil's Thumb, dirt bike use (motorcycle) has caused severe erosion and the scarring of the landscape. This portion, under natural processes, could be returned to a natural condition after a few seasons if motorcycle use is discontinued.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Adobe Badlands unit is of sufficient size as to be managed for wilderness values and is generally affected by the forces of nature with man's work substantially unnoticeable. The unit, due to the diversity and ruggedness of terrain, contains outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined type of recreation. This unit meets the criteria required for a Wilderness Study Area.



1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 m. = 1 Mile

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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION

Size 21,680 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-388
Area Name Black Canyon
of the Gunnison
Contiguous

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 10 miles east of Delta and 7 miles north of Montrose (Montrose - Delta Counties).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After initial inventory boundary adjustments, this unit consisted of 22,280 acres of public land. Two boundary adjustments have been made as a result of the intensive inventory. In the northern portion of the unit, 240 acres have been deleted. This was rimland that was separated from the main portion of the unit by cliffs and steep slopes. It was open terrain that did not offer outstanding opportunities for either solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. In the southeastern portion of the unit the boundary was redrawn to exclude a BLM constructed road that is used for access to two reservoirs which are maintained by the BLM. This resulted in a 360-acre deletion. After intensive inventory boundary adjustments, Unit CO-030-388 consists of 21,680 acres of public land. Approximately 17,981 acres within the unit have been withdrawn for the protection of recreation values by the BLM. The southern boundary of the unit is contiguous with existing wilderness in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument (11,180 acres). Portions of the unit are leased for grazing and there are some unpatented mining claims within the boundaries. It is surrounded by a mixture of public, private and National Park Service lands. The unit is of sufficient size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.

NATURALNESS:

Unit CO-030-388 consists primarily of the rugged double canyon system known as the Gunnison Gorge. The steep, narrow inner canyon is carved into dark Precambrian rock while the wider upper canyon is made up of lighter colored sedimentary strata. About 11 miles of the Gunnison River are contained within the unit. Pinyon and juniper trees are the dominant vegetation with a riparian zone along the river. With the exception of two ways which need rehabilitation, those riparian areas which are found within the unit are isolated and minor in the context of the large canyon dominated by the forces of nature. They consist primarily of ways and some past mineral exploration activity in the form of shallow pits and adits. Most are screened from view by topography and vegetation except in their immediate vicinity. The area as a whole is primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are available throughout most of this unit. Topographic screening is the main factor in the deep, narrow inner gorge. The outer gorge, with its rugged terrain and scattered pinyon-juniper woodland provides both vegetative and topographic screening. On the rim areas, it is a dense growth of pinyon-juniper that provides outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Unit CO-030-388 provides a number of outstanding primitive recreation opportunities. The clear, cold Gunnison River supports an excellent trout fishery and has a challenging series of rapids which provide for outstanding rafting/kayaking opportunities. Hiking, backpacking, and climbing are possible throughout the unit and portions of the area are suitable for horseback riding. The high scenic quality of the colorful double canyon system of Gunnison Gorge enhances all of the recreation opportunities available here.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

This unit possesses several supplemental values. It provides habitat for several rare and endangered plant and animal species including river otters which were recently reintroduced to the area. It contains one of the highest concentrations of wintering bald eagles in southwestern Colorado and is prime peregrine falcon habitat. The unit is geologically interesting and contains several historical and archeological sites.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

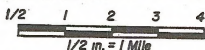
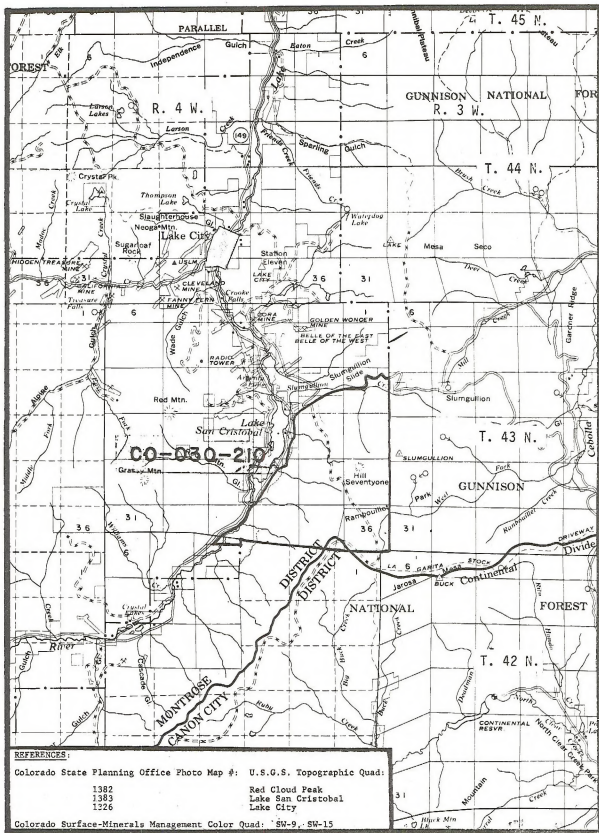
Two ways within the unit show signs of original construction but are no longer maintained. An old bulldozed route near the head of the Ute Trail has left a noticeable cut in the natural slope of the outer canyon. Although it is well-screened by topography and vegetation, its impact upon the naturalness of the unit could be further reduced by hand labor including planting of pinyon/juniper, sage and other local native plants. A way which follows the east bench above the inner gorge just south of the Smith Fork has numerous bulldozed cuts in the existing terrain. Although these cuts are screened by topography, they are still substantially noticeable in their immediate vicinity. Hand labor could accelerate the natural rehabilitation process and reduce the impact of this way to an acceptable level.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Black Canyon of the Gunnison Contiguous inventory unit is a large area (21,680 acres) that is primarily natural in character. The clear, cold Gunnison River which supports an excellent trout fishery, along with the rugged and scenic double canyon of the Gunnison Gorge, provides for outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and for solitude. The area has outstanding scenic values and possesses several supplemental values. The unit meets all the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.

MONTROSE DISTRICT

AREAS NOT RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 5,980 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-210
Area Name Ranibouillet park

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Gunnison National Forest southeast of Lake City (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit consists of 5,980 acres of public land with no non-public land inholdings. The boundaries have not been modified. Portions of the unit are leased for grazing. There are no known easements or mining claims within the unit. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public BLM land, National Forest land and a small section of private land.

NATURALNESS:

The Ranibouillet Park Unit consists of steep slopes and drainages opening up to large parks in the higher elevations. The unit is about 80 percent forested with over 40 open areas dispersed through the unit. The unit contains a mixture of aspen, fir, spruce and pine. The higher elevations exhibit expanses of alpine tundra. The unit contains a number of major imprints detracting from the naturalness of the area. A vehicular route traversing the unit is substantially noticeable and splits the unit (in the northern portion of the unit, it was determined to be a road, the rest a substantially noticeable way). It receives heavy recreational use and constitutes a high impact upon the naturalness of the area. The cumulative effect of a number of imprints associated with old logging practices found in the Sawmill Park area and a small section near the northern boundary also creates a major impact upon the unit's naturalness. The unit contains major imprints of man that are substantially noticeable. It does not meet naturalness criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Most of the unit contains dense forests interspersed with small open areas. This vegetative screening, combined with the topographic screening provided by steep drainages in the western portion of the unit, creates outstanding opportunities for solitude. Solitude would be hindered near the vehicular route traversing the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Due to the varied topography, including high mountain parks and steep drainages and the diverse vegetation of the sub-alpine forests and alpine tundra, the unit offers opportunities for a number of different activities. The area provides outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain climbing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, photography and sightseeing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

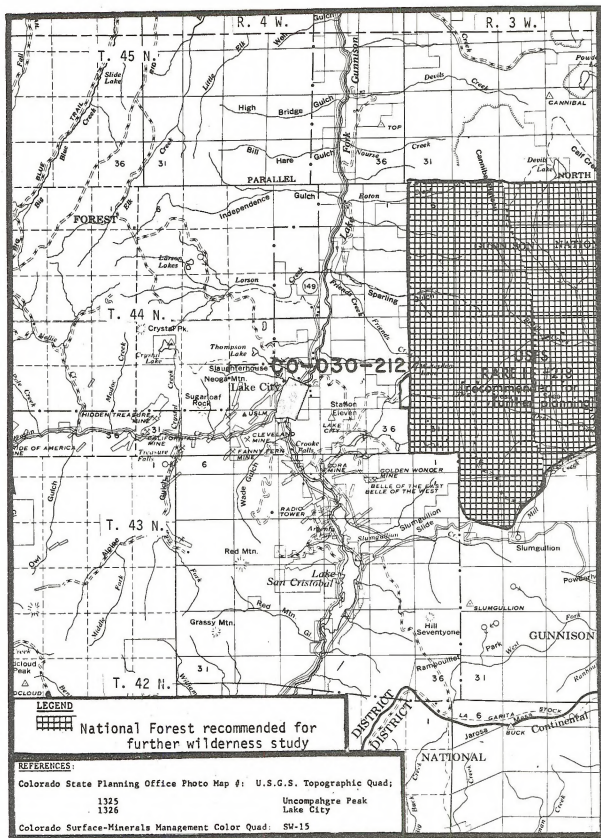
The unit has a scenic supplemental value offering vistas of Uncompahgre Peak and the Wetterhorn area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Major imprints within the area will not return to a natural condition without mechanical manipulation. Vehicle ways and skid trails associated with past logging operations have a high impact upon the unit's naturalness. The old road cuts and swaths cut through the timber could not be rehabilitated by hand labor or natural processes within a reasonable length of time.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit meets the size requirement for a W.S.A. Its forest vegetation and open parks provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. However, a number of substantially noticeable imprints of man can be found within the unit. A vehicle route constituting a high impact upon the naturalness of the unit traverses the area and cuts the unit in half. Another imprint associated with old logging practices constitutes a noticeable impairment to the naturalness of the unit. These areas could not be returned to a natural condition without mechanical manipulation. The Ranibouillet Park Unit is not recommended for a Wilderness Study Area due to the major imprints of man which impair the naturalness of the area.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 80 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-212
Area Name Waterdog Lake

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Gunnison National Forest, east of Lake City (Hinsdale County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Because this unit is contained within a Special Project Area (Gunnison Basin Range Environmental Statement), an intensive inventory was conducted during the summer of 1978. The intensive inventory boundaries remain the same as those previously identified. The unit contains 80 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The unit is contiguous with RARE II Area #218 (31,900 acres), which has been recommended for wilderness to Congress, thus meeting size criteria for a Wilderness Study Area. There are no known leases, easements or mining claims within the unit. It is surrounded by a mixture of public (BLM), private and Forest Service lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Waterdog lake unit includes part of the western slope of the Cannibal Plateau. The unit has a 600-foot elevation gain with the peak elevation at 11,000 feet. It is forested with spruce, fir, and aspens. Small parks of annual and perennial grasses are scattered throughout the unit. There are only a few imprints of man within the unit; however, due to its small size, these imprints substantially affect the naturalness of the unit. The area has been logged in the past and stumps are visible throughout the unit. It has revegetated, but the cut is still noticeable. A short (approximately two-tenths of a mile) way parallels a drainage in the southern part of the unit, but it has revegetated and is substantially unnoticeable. Overall, the unit does not meet the naturalness criteria required of a W.S.A.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The area by itself does not provide outstanding opportunities for solitude because of limited acreage. However, when combined with adjacent Forest Service RARE II lands (a combined acreage of 32,000 plus acres), outstanding opportunities for solitude would exist.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The area by itself does not provide outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. However, it is contiguous with, and a natural extension of, USFS RARE II Area No. 218 (recommended for further wilderness study) which contains rugged mountain terrain and lakes and streams. This combined area would provide diverse outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

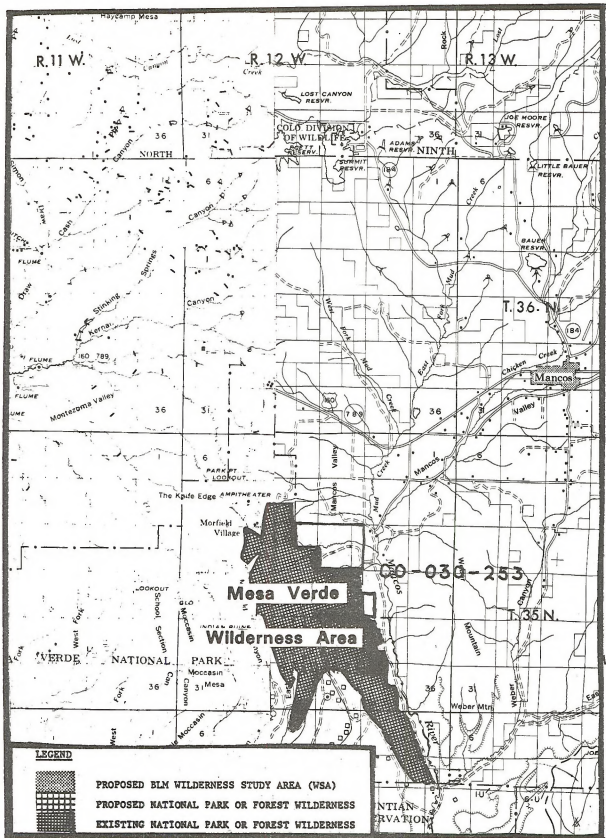
No known supplemental values were found within the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

It would require the removal of stumps by mechanical means for the timber cut to return to a natural condition.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The unit is contiguous with the U.S. Forest Service RARE II Area #218 (31,900 acres), thus meeting the size criteria for a Wilderness Study Area. In conjunction with this RARE II Area, which contains a large acreage of rugged mountain terrain, the unit would provide outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. However, the unit contains major imprints of man and does not meet naturalness criteria. The entire area has been logged in the past and, though it has revegetated, the cut is still evident. The Waterdog Unit is not recommended as a Wilderness Study Area due to the impact of timber cut upon the naturalness of the unit.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 720 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-253
Area Name Mesa Verde Contiguous

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Mesa Verde national Park southwest of Mancos (Montezuma County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit consists of 720 acres of public land with no non-public land inholdings. The boundaries have not been modified. Portions of the unit are leased for grazing. The unit, originally thought contiguous to designated Park Service wilderness was found to be separated by large, bulldozed firebreaks along the Park Service/public lands boundaries. The remainder of the unit is surrounded by private lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Mesa Verde Unit is characterized by steep, rugged slopes heavily vegetated in pinyon/juniper. Within the unit are numerous vehicle ways including several which provide access to the large, substantially noticeable bulldozed firebreaks separating the Park Service lands from the Bureau lands. The unit does not meet naturalness criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the unit's relatively small size and segregation from adjacent Park Service wilderness, the unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Due to the unit's relatively small size and segregation from adjacent Park Service wilderness, the unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

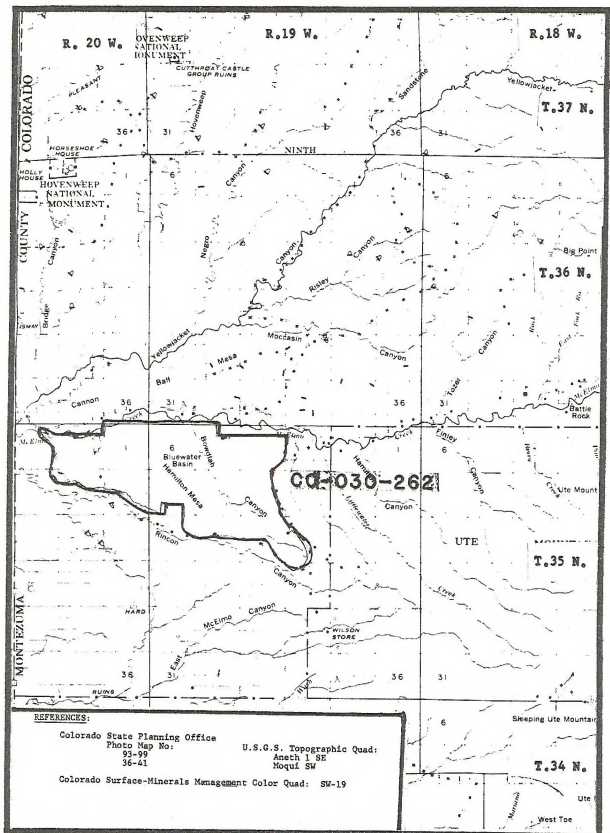
The unit offers educational, scientific and historical values in the form of archeological resources. Due to the surrounding lands, the area also offers high scenic values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Major imprints, such as the bulldozed firebreaks, will not return to a natural condition without mechanical manipulation. In addition, the numerous ways traversing through pinyon/juniper vegetation could not be rehabilitated by hand labor or natural processes within a reasonable length of time.

RATIONAL FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Unit CO-030-253, due to the substantially noticeable bulldozed firebreaks and numerous vehicle ways, is neither of sufficient size as to be practical or manageable as wilderness nor does the area retain its primeval character and influence. Due to its relatively small size, the area does not contain outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.



1/2 1 2 3 4
 1/2 in. = 1 mile

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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Montrose District

Not Recommended as a W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-030-262

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 6,240 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-262
Area Name Hamilton Mesa

GENERAL LOCATION: Southwest of Cortez (Montezuma County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After initial inventory boundary adjustments, approximately 6,240 acres of public land are contained within this unit, making it of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. The area is leased for grazing, oil and coal, and contains some unpatented mining claims. All lands within the unit are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The area is surrounded by a mixture of private and public land.

NATURALNESS:

The topography of the unit varies from sandy washes and near vertical canyons to gently rolling mesas. The geologic structure of the area is best exhibited in the formations apparent within Blue Water Basin, an erosional, rounded-out area displaying the Morrison formation in almost a 360 degree view. Vegetation varies with topography with piñon/juniper dominating the slopes of the canyons, and giving way to sagebrush and grass on the mesa tops. Along the canyon bottom, vegetation is sparse and in some areas virtually nonexistent. Human disturbances consist mainly of stock reservoirs found within Blue Water Basin and some minor drainages and unobtrusive ways traversing Hamilton Mesa and extending within the unit from the eastern boundary road. Due to topographic screening and in some instances, vegetative screening, these isolated impacts upon the landscape are substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The lack of vegetative cover in combination with the relatively small size of the unit and general lack of topographic diversity are all factors contributing to the lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude. Areas such as Bowditch Canyon do contain opportunities for solitude, but these are limited and cannot be considered "outstanding".

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit provides opportunities for several primitive and unconfined recreation activities such as hiking, horseback riding and hunting. However, because of the relatively small size of the unit in conjunction with the lack of topographic diversity in the core of the unit, these cannot be called outstanding opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

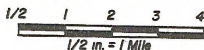
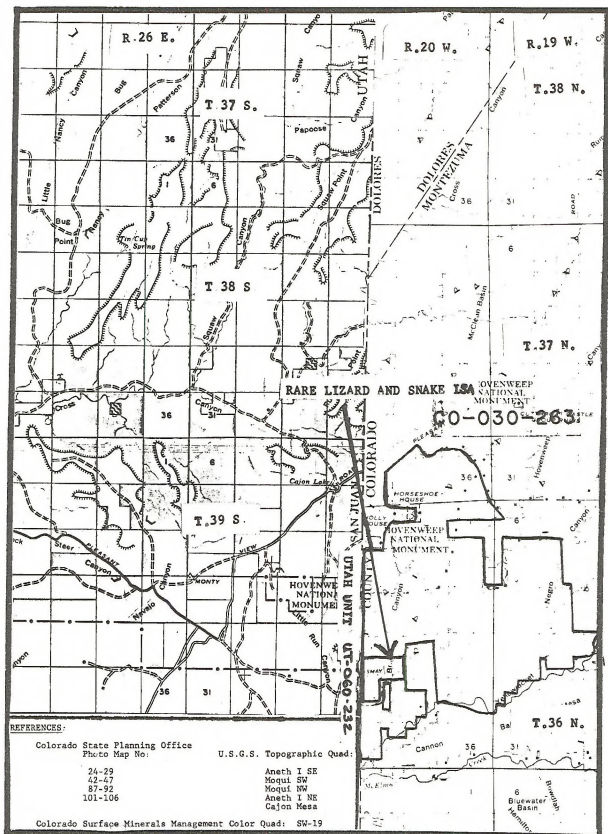
The Hamilton Mesa Unit is within an area rich in archeological resources. These archeological sites have cultural and educational values which enhance the unit's wilderness quality.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints within the unit are returning to a natural condition without man-made manipulation. No portions of the unit require active rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Hamilton Mesa Unit is primarily natural in character and is of sufficient size to be considered for wilderness study. However, due to the small size of the unit relative to the lack of topographic and vegetative diversity, the area does not contain outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Therefore, the unit does not meet all the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area and thus, is not recommended for further wilderness study.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 12,413 acres
District Montrose

Inventory No. CO-030-263
Area Name Rare Lizard & Snake

GENERAL LOCATION: West of Cortez (Montezuma County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After BLM field evaluation, adjustments were made in the initial inventory; the final initial inventory boundaries contained 12,413 acres of public land. The intensive inventory boundaries are the same as the boundaries for the final initial inventory. 443 acres of land within this unit are withdrawn as the Rare Lizard and Snake Natural Area. It is contiguous with Utah BLM inventory unit UT-060-232 (Moab District) which is presently being intensively inventoried. The decision on whether or not the combined unit will be designated as a WSA will be made by September, 1980, when both states have completed their inventories and public comment periods. There are 160 acres of non-public land inholdings within the unit, but these are not calculated in the inventory acreage nor are they inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public and private lands. A majority of the unit is covered by winter and spring grazing leases. Most of the unit is leased for CO2 development.

NATURALNESS:

The Rare Lizard and Snake Unit consists of canyons of a northwest to southeast orientation interspersed with rolling mesas and solitary buttes. The vegetation in the unit varies between sagebrush grassland to pinyon/juniper. The most common imprints are old ways used for access to grazing allotments and stock reservoirs. Most of these ways follow major drainages. When considered separately, the ways are only minor imprints but the cumulative effect of all the ways constitutes a substantial impact upon the naturalness of the unit. They show evidence of past construction (with bench cuts between one and five feet) and though they are not regularly maintained, they still provide access to stock reservoirs. A number of stock reservoirs can be found in the unit. Three reservoirs are located along the way to the east of Bridge Canyon. Two can be found near the extreme northern boundary of the Canyon. Two can be found near the extreme northern boundary of the unit. One reservoir can be found along a way between Hovenweep and Negro Canyons. Though most of the reservoirs are revegetating and unnoticeable, some still hold water and are used by grazing stock. A small area of about 50 acres in the northern portion of the unit was chained some 15-20 years ago. The stumps are still noticeable, though the area is beginning to revegetate with young juniper, sage and a variety of perennial grasses. These imprints, when considered together, constitute significant impacts upon the unit's naturalness. Man's works within the unit are substantially noticeable, impacting the area's naturalness and making it unsuitable for further wilderness consideration.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The canyons within this unit provide topographic screening as well as vegetative screening by pinyon/juniper. Though the mesa tops are relatively flat, small washes found along the periphery of the mesas add complexity and diversity to the landscape. Scenic vistas atop the mesas promote feelings of remoteness and isolation which enhance opportunities for solitude. This unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

With numerous ways dividing the area and private land projecting into the unit, unconfined freedom of movement is restricted, limiting recreational activity. Though the area provides some opportunity for primitive, unconfined recreation, outstanding opportunities do not exist.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit is within a rich archeological area and a number of sites have been discovered within the unit. This includes trading and camping sites of the Anasazi Indians. The area also displays a variety of topographic and vegetative features which provide diverse habitats for animals ranging from reptiles to large game. 443 acres have been administratively designated as a natural area by the Bureau of Land Management to protect the habitat of rare lizards and snakes found within the area. The unit displays a convergence of two major regions, the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin and, due to this merging, contains an assemblage of herpetofauna found only in this zone. The desert ecosystem displayed within the unit also offers opportunities to study desert ecology.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

No imprints of man within the unit require active rehabilitation.

RATIONAL FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

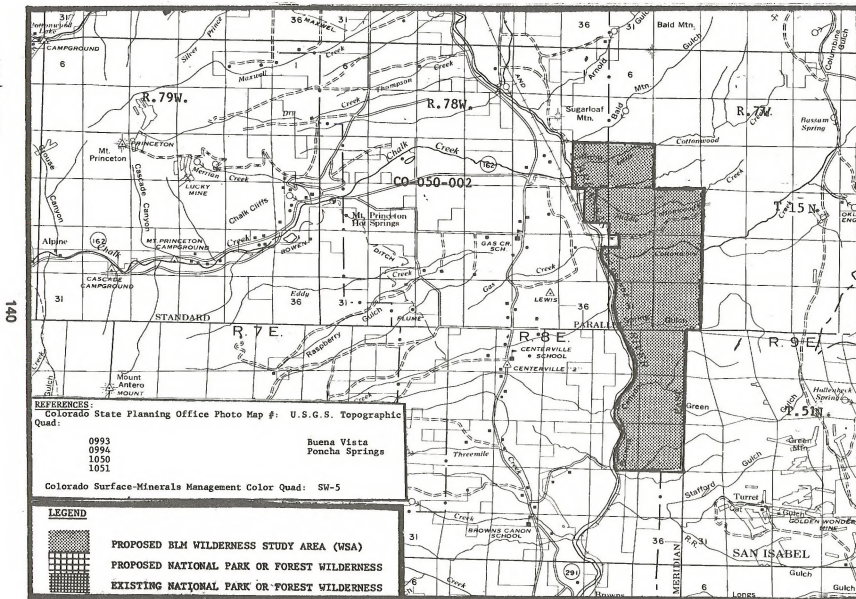
The Rare Lizard and Snake Unit is of sufficient size and contains a number of supplemental values including an unusual assemblage of herpetofauna. Small washes and canyons in combination with pinyon/juniper woodland provide outstanding opportunities for solitude within the unit. However, the unit does not provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation nor does it meet the naturalness criteria. Man's works within the unit are substantially noticeable impacting the area's naturalness thus making it unsuitable for further wilderness consideration.

CANON CITY DISTRICT

AREAS RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 m. = 1 Mile

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



Recommended as a W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-050-002

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 6,468 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-002
Area Name Browns Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 6 miles south of Buena Vista (Fremont Park County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit contains 6,468 acres of public land administered by the BLM. A proposed protective withdrawal was filed in 1976 to protect the scenic, historic, geologic, and natural values of the area while it was being studied for primitive area qualities. Contiguous lands are a combination of public, private, and U. S. Forest Service lands.

NATURALNESS:

The topography in the unit is rugged, varying in elevation from an average of 7,500 feet near the Arkansas River to approximately 8,400 feet near the eastern boundary. Access is possible by walking along the Arkansas River and going up any of the following gulches: Little and Middle Cottonwood, Cottonwood Creek, Spring Gulch, Green Gulch, Sawmill Gulch, and one unnamed gulch going through Sec. 24, T. 51 N., R. 8 E. Vegetation throughout the area is sparse with piñon-juniper being the most common timber type and ground cover including rabbitbrush, blue grama grass, mountain mahogany, Indian ricegrass, prickly pear cactus, and yucca. A few old mines and old cabins remain within the area. These are generally not visible from more than 75 feet and are considered substantially unnoticeable due to topographic and vegetative screening. The fact that these are shaft mines makes them less visible than pits.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The topography of the unit is very rugged with many mountains, hills, canyons, and gulches. The canyons and gulches offer outstanding opportunities for solitude since they block out outside sights and sounds. These specifically include Little and Middle Cottonwood Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Spring Gulch, Sawmill Gulch, Green Gulch, and other unnamed gulches. In addition, many of the gulches have cottonwood trees providing vegetative screening. A good example of both topographic and vegetative screening is in the NE1/4, Sec. 29, T. 15 S., R. 77 W.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The configuration of the land offers outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within the drainages. Outstanding opportunities exist for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, and snowshoeing. A 3 1/2 mile loop trail goes along Middle Cottonwood Gulch, Cottonwood Gulch and along the Arkansas River. The unit offers outstanding opportunities for bird-watching with 10 different species of birds and eight species of raptors being spotted. These include great-horned owl, saw whet and screech owls, Swainson's Hawk, and golden eagle. Outstanding opportunities exist for photography and sightseeing for ecologic features within this unit. The many hills and peaks provide vantage points for photography while the exposed cliffs make it easy to study various types of geologic strata.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

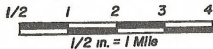
The unit contains important cultural resource values representing a period from 10,000 years ago through more historic periods.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

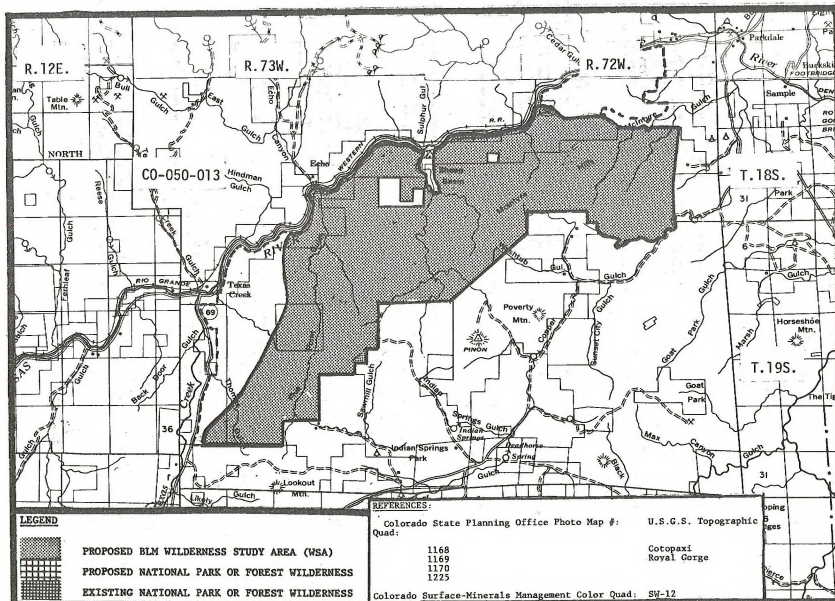
All impacts in this unit are minimal and well screened by either the surrounding topography or vegetation, and are not major impacts.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Unit 002 contains all the physical characteristics (including solitude) to qualify it as a Wilderness Study Area. It is over 5,000 acres of contiguous land which is all administered by the BLM. While there are some imprints of man, these are all minor detractors from naturalness. The most significant imprint is part of a way in Secs. 19 and 20, T. 15 S., R. 77 W. However, piñon and juniper trees have screened this part of the way so it is not visible from over 25 yards. Outstanding opportunities for solitude are available in many places throughout the unit, however, the more accessible locations are in the major drainages: Little and Middle Cottonwood Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Spring Gulch, Sawmill Gulch, and Green Gulch. Vegetative screening and the mountains rising around these gulches screen out outside sights and sounds. Sightseeing and photography of birds, mammals, and scenery are also available in this unit. Ten types of birds and eight types of raptors have been spotted. Other types of primitive and unconfined recreation include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, and snowshoeing through any of the major drainages previously mentioned. Rock outcroppings also provide geologic study of various rock strata. Many important archeological sites have been found within the unit boundary. All of the values mentioned above combine to give this area the qualities necessary to become a W.S.A.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 16,800 acres
District: Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-013
Area Name McIntyre Hills

GENERAL LOCATION: Twelve miles southwest of Canon City (Fremont County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The McIntyre Hills unit contains 16,800 acres of public land with 350 acres of Colorado State lands and 60 acres of private land as inholdings, which are not calculated in the inventory unit acreage and are not inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public, private and state lands. The unit is covered by an active grazing lease. Within the boundaries over 50 mining claims have been documented. Portions of the unit along the northern and western borders are covered by a powersite withdrawal. During the initial inventory approximately 5,000 acres were added to the unit which corresponded to the powersite withdrawals along the northern and western boundaries. Three deletions were made during the intensive inventory totaling approximately 3,200 acres. The northeast corner was altered to exclude ways and mining activity. The boundary was altered along Sheep Basin to omit two ways, a mine, water pipeline and a large earth filled dam. A major alteration along the western boundary was made to exclude old mining activity, ways, a powerline and cut and filled banks of an old railroad system.

NATURALNESS:

The McIntyre Hills unit consists of a mixture of rolling hills and steep, rugged mountains. The unit is incised by meandering streams which create a maze of interconnected valleys and gulleys. The vegetation within McIntyre Hills consists of piñon-juniper throughout the unit with some pine and fir in the higher elevations. The larger stream beds contain cottonwood trees. Three boundary changes resulted from imprints of man. The northeast corner was altered to omit ways and mineral exploration pits. Some of the ways traversed the hillisides with cutbanks which were visible throughout this portion of the unit. A portion of the mouth of Sheep Basin was deleted to omit two ways, a cut bank for a metal water line, a mine and a large earth filled dam. It was judged that a visitor to this area could see these imprints of man throughout the area. The western boundary was altered to omit four large mines with cutbank ways leading to them, an old railroad bed with cut and filled areas, and a powerline system. The effects of these imprints of man is a disruption of the natural contours and color of this portion of the unit. The accumulative acreage deleted from the unit is 3,200 acres. The acreage remaining in the unit is generally natural in character. The imprints remaining include a way, a mineral exploration pit and an old corral, all of which are well-screened by vegetation and are either rehabilitating naturally or could be removed by hand labor.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist throughout the McIntyre Hills Unit. Numerous drainages flow through the unit in a south to north direction. These drainages twist and turn to create areas where visitors can be screened from one another within a few yards. Side drainages add additional miles of the same quality areas. Additional areas which offer solitude can be found on the hills and mountains because of the heavy vegetation. Thickets of piñon-juniper and pine create areas that provide screening.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities to hike throughout this unit abound because of the stream beds. These intermittent streams have deposited sand and gravel beds which provide easy and interesting foot paths throughout the unit. In some areas the streams have worn through hard rock areas which provide stair stepped trails through gorges and canyons. The wildlife in this area offers opportunities for photography and sightseeing. The unit supports a good population of raptor birds such as golden and bald eagles and assorted hawks. Wild turkey are abundant throughout the year and deer use much of the area as winter habitat. Smaller animals are especially abundant around the springs found in the stream beds.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

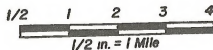
Located 15 minutes driving time from Canon City, McIntyre Hills is within easy access of the main population centers of Pueblo, Colorado Springs and numerous smaller communities. Natural springs throughout the unit provide water for visitors. Although not potable, the water can be boiled for human consumption.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

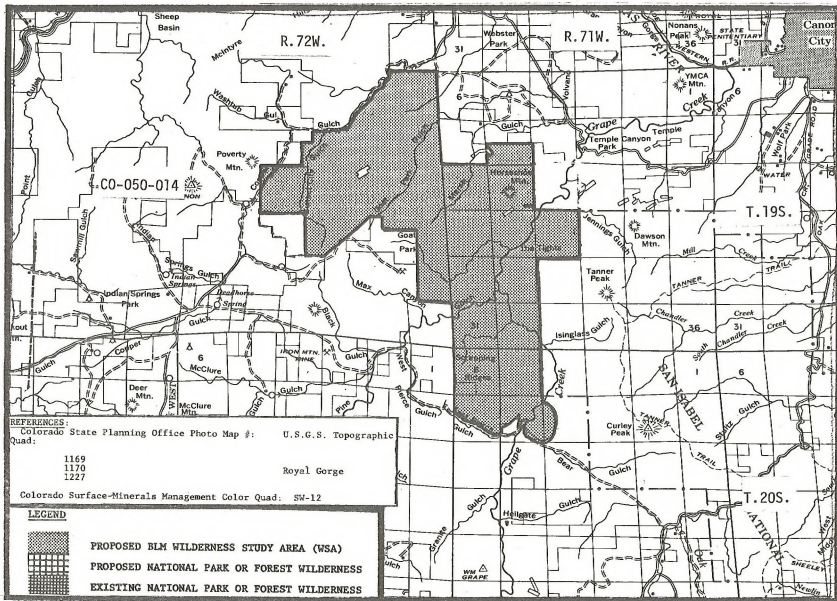
The way, mineral exploration pit and old corral located in upper Five Point Gulch are rehabilitating through natural processes, hand labor could be used to rehabilitate the area to a substantially unnoticeable condition if necessary. The firewood sale area along the southern border is rehabilitating naturally. The tire tracks are weathering and the color of the tree stumps has blended into the natural environment. The remains of the portable saw log operation could be removed by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The McIntyre Hills unit contains 16,800 acres of public land. After the boundary changes which omitted major works of man the unit retains a natural appearance. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive, unconfined type of recreation abound in the gulleys, valleys and hillisides. Several supplemental values have been identified, including close proximity to population centers and the availability of water. Overall, the unit meets the criteria required of a W.S.A.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	11,700 acres	Inventory No.	CO-050-014
District	Canon City	Area Name	Lower Grape Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 7 miles west of Canon City (Fremont County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Three boundary adjustments were made to this unit. Along the western boundary, approximately 1,080 acres in Sec. 21, T. 19 S., R. 72 W. were omitted because of major detractors from naturalness in the form of a cut and filled way, exploration pits, and a cabin. Also, the boundary has been adjusted to exclude Sec. 7, T. 19 S., R. 71 W. from the unit because of previous mining activity. The remains of the mining include four mine exploration pits and an area approximately 30' x 30' which was leveled by a bulldozer. In Sec. 8, T. 20 S., R. 71 W., about 80 acres have been excluded from the unit near Grape Creek because the land has been cleared of trees and has four buildings. Contiguous lands are in a combination of private and state ownership, along with some public and U. S. Forest Service lands. These adjoining lands are used primarily for grazing and some mining exploration.

NATURALNESS:

Topography is steep and rugged with elevations varying from 6,400 feet near Webster Park to an average of 8,300 feet on three unnamed mountain peaks near Goat Park. Access to the unit is good through Sunset City, Goat Park and Marsh Gulch, and Grape Creek. Vegetation in the area is sparse. The primary vegetative type is piñon and juniper with ponderosa pine frequently found along Grape Creek. Ground cover commonly includes a variety of grasses, rabbitbrush, prickly pear cactus, and yucca. In Sec. 14, T. 19 S., R. 72 W. about one-fourth mile up the west fork of Goat Park Gulch is an old gold mine. This site has three pits with tailing piles about 10 feet high. With the exception of one pile of tailings, everything on this site is well screened by both topography and piñon and juniper. The tailings which are not screened by vegetation set in the gulch and are visible from about 40 yards down the gulch. In Sec. 19, T. 19 S., R. 71 W. is an old mine site with a vertical and horizontal mine shaft, two pits 10' x 15' where dirt has been taken for fill, and a shack (8' x 5'). Behind the shack a way was constructed about 100 feet to some pipe vents for the mine shaft. This mine site is well screened with vegetation and can be seen from about 100 yards up or down the gulch. A way was constructed into the mine from Marsh Gulch, however, it is only a detraction from naturalness in Sec. 19, T. 19 S., R. 71 W., where some parts were cut and filled during construction. This portion of the way is well screened with piñon and juniper and is not a major impact. Three patented mining claims are located in Sec. 19, T. 19 S., R. 71 W.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

This unit contains drainages such as Sunset City Gulch, Goat Park Gulch, Marsh Gulch, and Grape Creek which wind through mountains and other rugged topography. This topography in addition to the vegetation in some locations provides this unit with screening from sights and sounds outside the unit. Due to these factors, this unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit is very accessible through Sunset City Gulch, Goat Park Gulch, Marsh Gulch, and Grape Creek. These are all large drainages and have other smaller, but accessible, gulches feeding into them. These provide outstanding opportunities for hiking and backpacking. The unit also has scenic and photographic potential particularly from such vantage points as Horseshoe Mountain or any of three unnamed mountain peaks (over 8,000 feet) near the southern boundary. From these mountains the Sangre De Cristo Range can be seen along with a general panoramic view of the area. Also from the many ridges which parallel Grape Creek an outstanding view of the creek bed and surrounding canyons is available.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Lower Grape Creek unit contains no supplemental values.

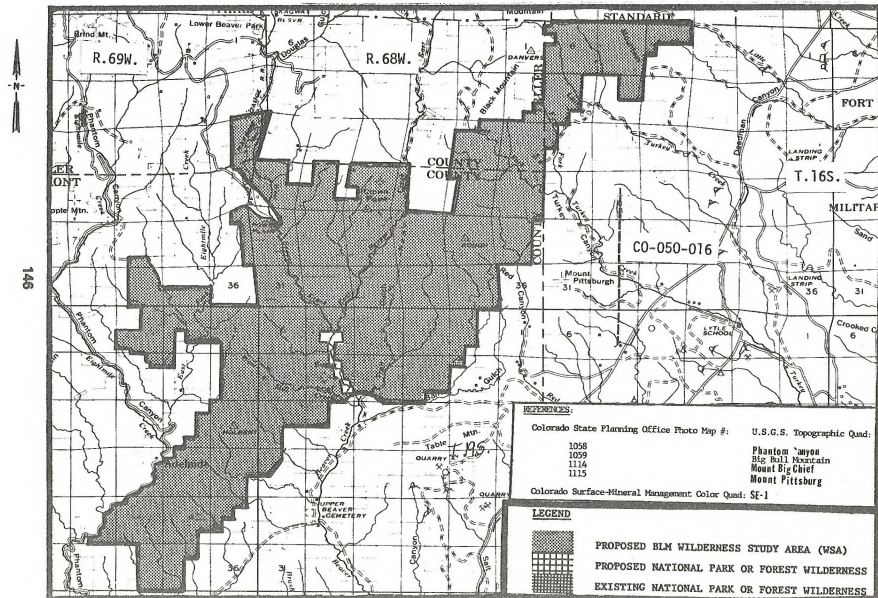
POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All impacts in this unit are either minimal and well screened by vegetation or topography or are major impacts with no possibility of returning to a natural condition. These major impacts have been excluded from the boundary.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit is over 5,000 acres (11,700 acres) of contiguous land which is entirely administered by BLM. Access to the unit is provided through the major drainages - Sunset City, Goat Park, and Marsh Gulch and Grape Creek. No major imprints of man exist within the unit. Solitude is provided by the mountainous and varied topography within the unit in addition to vegetative screening in some of the drainages. Outstanding photographic and scenic opportunities are available from Horseshoe Mountain and several unnamed mountain peaks over 7,500 feet in the southern part of the unit. The ridges and mountains paralleling Grape Creek also provide opportunities for sightseeing and photography. All the above-mentioned characteristics combine to give this unit the qualities necessary to become a Wilderness Study Area.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 26,210 acres
District: Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-016
Area Name: Beaver Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast of Canon City (Teller - Fremont - El Paso Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After boundary adjustments made in the initial inventory, approximately 26,210 acres of land are contained within this unit, making it of sufficient size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. Colorado State Division of Wildlife owns 870 acres of land forming corridor along Beaver Creek. Joint wilderness management of this land will be negotiated should the area be designated wilderness. The unit is surrounded by a mixture of public, private, and state lands. Documentation of mining claims is presently being assessed.

NATURALNESS:

The Beaver Creek unit varies in topographic features from rolling hills in the south to 9,000 foot peaks in the north. The forces of nature are apparent in the geologic structures of the unit which was created by sedimentary uplifts, fault controlled streams and differential weathering. Vegetative patterns can be seen to change along with the geologic formations. The unit contains areas of semiarid vegetation which lead to riparian zones along the streams and conifer/pine forest mixes on most of the higher elevations. Only minor imprints of man remain within the unit boundaries. Some of these imprints are old trails or ways along West and East Mill Gulch and maintenance trails along an old powerline with an occasional power pole still standing. Also associated with the trail system is a log cabin used by many recreational visitors. Minor imprints of man can also be found in the form of small exploration pits or mining scars at the confluence of the two forks of Beaver Creek and East and West Mill Gulch.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Primarily due to the varied topography of the unit, with dozens of stream drainages rising to ridgetops over 9,000 feet in elevation, the Beaver Creek unit does offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. Vegetative screening is also a factor, particularly in the western portion of the unit. Piñon-Juniper dominates the vegetation type and generally covers most of the ridges throughout, making it difficult to distinguish other individuals who might be present. The large size and blocked configuration further enhance opportunities for solitude; a larger area increases the chances that an individual will find himself alone, and the blocked configuration helps insure that outside influences will not disrupt feelings of solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present in the Beaver Creek unit due to a combination of several factors. Topographic variation, unique geologic features, diverse plant and animal life, the creeks, and several access trails contribute to opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, photography, fishing, hunting, and general sightseeing. In general, the number of activities available and the quality of the experience associated with them, provide this unit with outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type or recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Beaver Creek's close proximity to several eastern slope cities and its year-round accessibility are considered to be supplemental values. Beaver Creek, itself, has unusual attributes, including high water quality and a population of native cutthroats.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

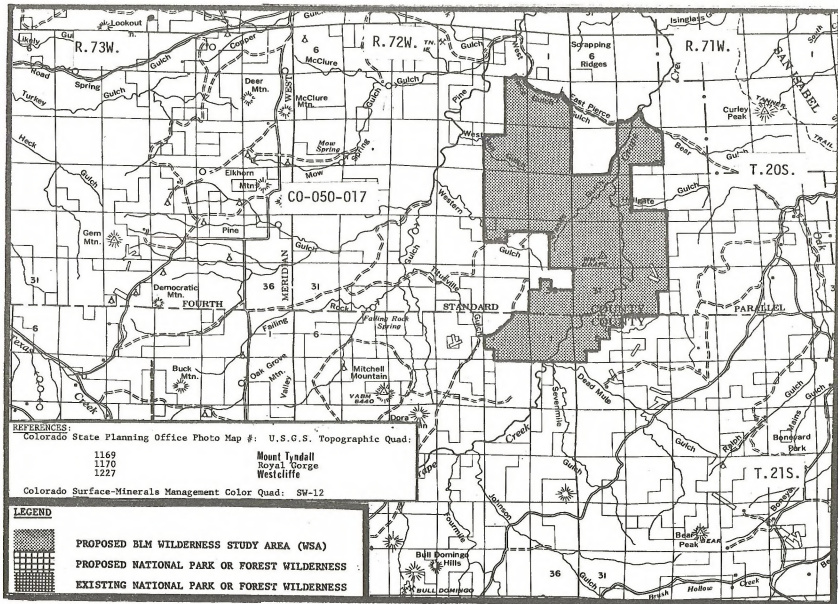
All ways determined to have a minimal impact are rehabilitating naturally. Generally, all minor imprints of man remaining in the unit can be returned to a substantially unnoticeable condition by either natural processes or by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Beaver Creek inventory unit is a large tract of undeveloped BLM land (26,210 acres), retaining its primeval character and influence, and containing no significant permanent improvements. Outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are present, due to topographic and vegetative screening, as well as several "supplemental values." Overall, the unit meets the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.

1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 m. = 1 Mile

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



Recommended as a W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-050-017

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 10,200 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-017
Area Name Upper Grape Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 10 miles southwest of Canon City (Fremont - Custer Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

One boundary adjustment was made to this unit. Secs. 7 and 18, T. 20 S., R. 71 W. and the SW1/4, Sec. 13, T. 20 S., R. 72 W. were excluded because of major imprints of man. These sections contain about 1 1/2 miles of cut and filled ways leading to two mine exploration pits and two mines with four areas about 10' x 10' which have been leveled by a bulldozer. Little vegetative screening surrounds these sites. Lands contiguous with this unit are used primarily for grazing with some thorium exploration on lands adjoining the eastern part of the unit. With the exception of two patented mining claims totalling 30 acres in Secs. 29 and 32, T. 20 S., R. 71 W., all lands in this unit are administered by the BLM. These private lands are not included in the wilderness inventory.

NATURALNESS:

The topography on the western part of the unit is hilly while the rest of the unit is very steep and rugged with mountainous topography. Primary access to the unit is along Grape Creek which runs from south to north through the unit. Vegetation, while generally sparse, is mostly piñon and juniper with ponderosa pine and cottonwood frequently found along Grape Creek. Ground cover includes a variety of grasses, rabbitbrush, prickly pear cactus, and yucca. Major mining impacts are in Secs. 7 and 18, T. 20 S., R. 71 W. and Sec. 13, T. 20 S., R. 72 W. These include two exploration pits, two mine shafts (one 10 feet deep and the other 25 feet deep) and about 1 1/2 miles of cut and filled ways. Alongside each exploration pit or mine shaft is an area which has been leveled (10' x 10') by a bulldozer. Neither the ways nor the old mines have grown over with vegetation or started to return to a natural condition to any large degree. Due to the lack of significant screening, these impacts are very obvious. As a result, the boundary for unit 017 has been altered to omit these impacts. The remainder of the unit is generally natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Steep cliffs and mountains on either side of Grape Creek along with the mountains on all sides of East and West Mill Gulch and Granite Gulch screen those areas from sights and sounds outside the drainages. Vegetation is an important factor along Grape Creek where cottonwood and some ponderosa pine provide screening.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit is accessible along Grape Creek, West Mill Gulch, and Granite Gulch where outstanding opportunities exist for hiking, backpacking and horseback riding. This unit also has scenic and photographic opportunities from the mountains and ridges paralleling Grape Creek and from the unnamed mountain (8,100 feet) between East Mill Gulch and Granite Gulch. Overall outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are found in the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

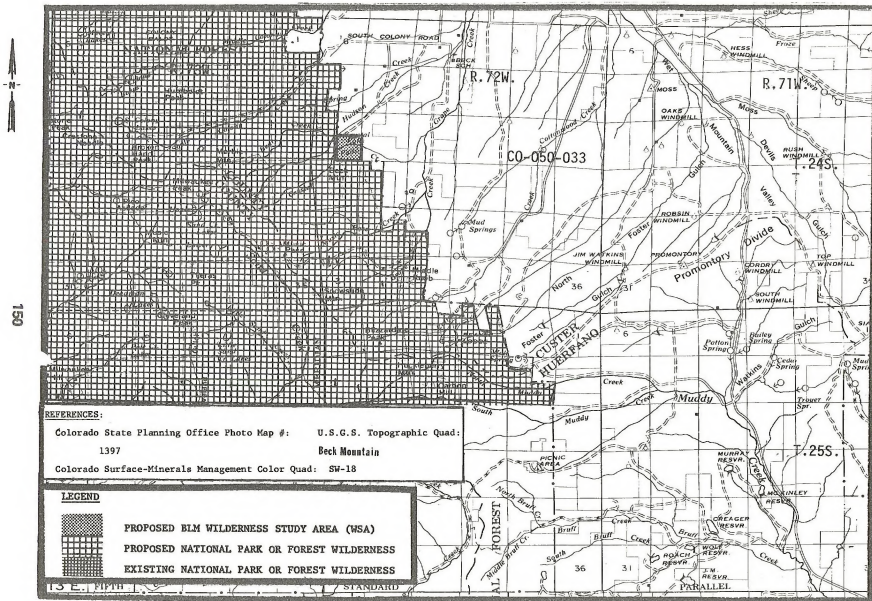
This unit contains no supplemental values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All major impacts in this unit are found in Secs. 7 and 18, T. 20 S., R. 71 W. and Sec. 13, T. 20 S., R. 72 W. and have been omitted from the unit by altering the boundary.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

This unit has all the characteristics to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area. It is also over 5,000 acres (10,200 acres) of contiguous land which is entirely administered by the BLM. In addition, Unit 017 contains no major imprints of man. The major drainages providing access to the unit are Grape Creek, West and East Mill Gulch, and Granite Gulch. These drainages, in addition to other smaller unnamed drainages, are surrounded by steep and mountainous topography offering outstanding opportunities for solitude. The major creeks and gulches mentioned above also provide outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking and horseback riding. Outstanding scenic photographic opportunities are available along the ridges and mountains paralleling Grape Creek. These opportunities are also available from the top of an unnamed mountain between East Mill Gulch and Granite Gulch which provides a view of the Sangre De Cristo Range and the general area to the southwest. All of the above-mentioned characteristics combine to give this unit the qualities necessary to become a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 160 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-033
Name of Area Crystal Falls

GENERAL LOCATION: 12 miles south of Westcliffe (Custer County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit contains 160 acres of BLM administered land which is contiguous to the Sangre de Cristo area in the San Isabel National Forest which is being recommended as a Wilderness Area. No boundary adjustments were made as a result of the intensive inventory. Land contiguous to this unit on the north and east is in private ownership and used for grazing. Contiguous U.S. Forest Service land on the south and west is recommended to become a Wilderness Area.

NATURALNESS:

Unit 033 is located in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountain Range. The topography is steep and sloping up to the west with Crystal Falls Creek flowing through the center. Vegetation is sparse except along the creek which is heavily timbered with ponderosa and lodgepole pine. The remainder of the land is primarily pasture containing various types of grasses, rabbitbrush, and prickly pear cactus. No imprints of man are found in the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

This unit adjoins the Sangre de Cristo area being recommended for wilderness by the U.S. Forest Service. This unit is complementary to the Sangre de Cristo area and shares that area's outstanding opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Rainbow hiking trail which runs 75 miles from Salida to Music pass goes through the middle of this unit. Along the trail are outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Crystal Falls unit is contiguous to the Sangre de Cristo area in the San Isabel National Forest which has been recommended as a wilderness area under RARE II. Private land adjoining the unit on the north and east is used for grazing. The 70 mile Rainbow hiking trail maintained by the U.S. Forest Service goes through the middle of the unit and offers outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. There are no major imprints of man found in the unit.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 2,300 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-131
Area Name Black Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Rio Grande National Forest, Northeastern edge of San Luis Valley (Saguache County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit contains 2,300 acres of public land. Adjacent boundaries include private and Colorado State lands on the west and public lands with roads separating them from the main unit. The eastern boundary is adjacent to a USFS recommended wilderness area A2-266. The entire unit is covered by an active grazing lease and four geothermal leases. Within the boundaries there are six documented mining claims. No boundary adjustments were made during the initial inventory. The intensive inventory resulted in two alterations. Approximately 430 acres were dropped from the most western portion to exclude the area where there was not a logical continuation of the USFS wilderness recommendation unit and which did not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive, unconfined type of recreation. Approximately five acres were dropped from the area near Black Canyon because of a mining operation which was considered a major imprint of man. The mine created a disruption of the land contour and a change in the color pattern.

NATURALNESS:

The Black Canyon unit consists of the sideslopes and lower mountains of the Sangre De Cristo Range. The upper portions of the unit are heavily forested with pine and fir while the lower reaches contain pinyon-juniper with aspen growing in the drainage bottoms. The unit contains five ways which ascend the drainages of Lime Canyon, Black Canyon, Orient Canyon, Hot Springs Canyon and Gardner Creek. They are considered minor imprints of man, due to their low visibility because of natural screening and weathering. A mining area at the mouth of Black Canyon resulted in a boundary change to omit the impact. Because it created a change in the contour and color of the landscape, it was considered a major impact of man.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist on the slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. Intermittent streams have created a maze of valleys which provide screening for visitors in the area. Likewise, the vegetation in this portion of the unit creates a screening effect. The density of fir, pines and juniper can hide visitors from one another within a few yards. A visitor to this area would not be able to distinguish a break between this unit and the adjacent USFS wilderness recommendation area A2-266. This portion of the unit appears to be a logical continuation of the USFS topography and vegetation.

The valley floor does not share this same logical, visual continuation. The relative flatness of the terrain contrasts with the steep hillsides of the mountains. Likewise, the lack of similar vegetative patterns creates a visual change. Outstanding opportunities for solitude do not exist in this portion of the unit. The relatively flat terrain does not provide the contouring necessary to screen visitors. The low growing plant species found in this area also does not provide screening. For these reasons and lack of outstanding opportunities for primitive or unconfined type of recreation, this portion of the unit will be dropped from the wilderness inventory.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking and photography exists along the varied slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. The vegetation of this portion of the unit is dense but the understorey is clear enough so that visitors can hike throughout the area. The valleys created by streams provide a stairstep approach to the upper reaches of the mountain slopes. Spotted throughout the area are vistas which overlook both the peaks of the mountain range and the vastness of the San Luis Valley. The portion of the unit which lies at the base of these mountains does not offer outstanding opportunities for unconfined recreation. The unvaried terrain does not offer a challenge to a hiker-horseback rider and the panoramic views are missing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The aspen within the drainage bottoms offer a bright contrast to the usual deep green when they turn to their fall colors. This effect attracts sightseers and photographers.

POSSIBILITY OF RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The ways which are located within the draws of this unit are rehabilitating naturally. Through time they should return to a substantially unnoticeable condition.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Black Canyon unit is a visual continuation of the USFS wilderness recommendation area. The similarities between the contour of the land and the vegetation make this unit a logical extension. Combined with the USFS land the unit offers outstanding opportunities for both solitude and a primitive, unconfined type of recreation. The unit is also natural in character. Overall, the area meets the criteria required of a W.S.A.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 870 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-1328
Area Name South Piney Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Rio Grande National Forest, Northeastern edge of San Luis Valley (Saguache County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The South Piney Creek unit contains 870 acres of public land administered by the BLM. It is located east of Villa Grove and adjacent to the USFS wilderness recommendation area A2-266. It is covered by an active grazing lease and several unpatented mining claims are located within its boundaries. Three boundary adjustments were made during the intensive inventory. Two were slight modifications which exclude mining activities on the western boundary. Both were considered major imprints of man because they created a change in the contour and color of the natural landscape. The third was made to exclude a portion along the western boundary. This area is not a visually logical continuation of the USFS wilderness recommendation unit. This portion also lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive, unconfined type of recreation. Approximately 720 acres were deleted during the intensive inventory.

NATURALNESS:

This unit consists of west facing slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. One peak of the mountain range reaches to 11,062 feet. The vegetation is a blend of pine, juniper and fir in the upper reaches of the unit and in the stream valleys. The lower slopes, before they meet the valley floor, are covered by juniper and pine on the north sides with grasses and shrubs on the south. Two mines and a road were located on the western edge of the north portion of the unit. The visual difference caused by the change of colors and a slight modification in the general contours of the land were the reasons the new boundary omitted this area. A way crosses the unit in the east along the Quarry Creek. This way is used by 4-wheel drive trucks, horse riders and hikers trying to reach the Black Mountain Trail higher in the Sangre De Cristo Range. This way is the only sign of man remaining in the new boundaries. It is considered a minor imprint of man because it remains hidden due to the heavy vegetation around it and weathering which blended it into the natural colors of the environment.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist on the slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. Intermittent streams have created a maze of valleys, which provide screening for visitors in the area. Likewise, the vegetation in this portion of the unit creates a screening effect. The density of fir, pines and juniper can hide visitors from one another within a few yards. A visitor to this area would not be able to distinguish a break between this unit and the adjacent USFS wilderness recommendation area A2-266. This portion of the unit appears to be a logical continuation of the USFS area because of the similarities of the vegetation and terrain.

The valley floor does not share this same logical, visual continuation. The relative flatness of the terrain contrasts with the steep hillside of the mountains. Likewise, the lack of similar vegetative patterns creates a visual change. Outstanding opportunities for solitude are absent in this portion of the unit. The relatively flat terrain does not provide the contouring necessary to screen visitors. The low growing plant species found in this area also does not provide screening. For these reasons and the lack of outstanding opportunities for primitive or unconfined type of recreation, this portion of the unit will be dropped from the wilderness inventory.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking and photography exists along the varied slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. The vegetation of this portion of the unit is dense but the understory is clear enough so that visitors can hike throughout the area. The valleys created by streams provide a staircase approach to the upper reaches of the mountain slopes. Scattered throughout the area are vistas which overlook both the peaks of the mountain range and the vastness of the San Luis Valley.

The portion of the unit which lies at the base of these mountains does not offer outstanding opportunities for unconfined recreation. The unvaried terrain does not offer a challenge to a hiker/horseback rider and the panoramic view is missing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No supplemental values are noted in the unit.

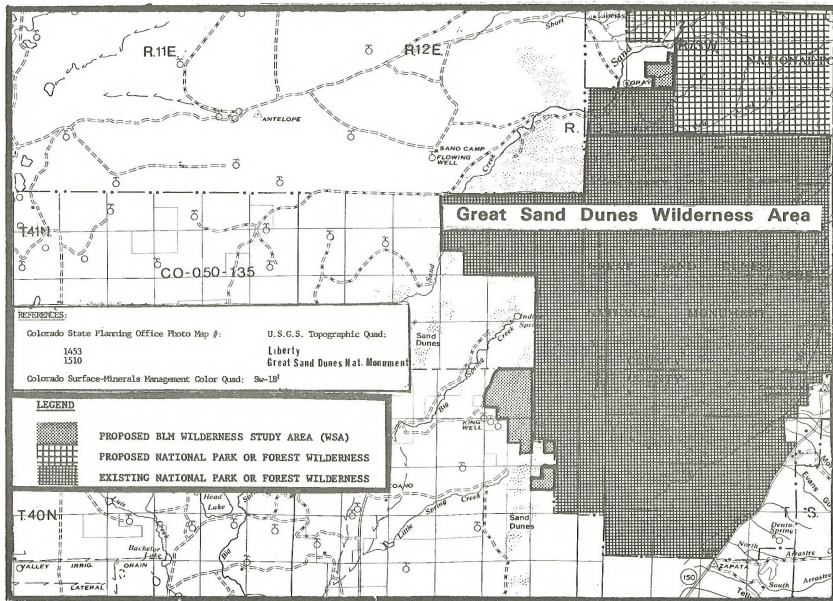
POSSIBILITY OF AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The way leading through the south eastern portion of the unit is a minor imprint of man and is rehabilitating naturally.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The South Piney Creek Unit appears to be in a natural condition. The portion of the unit which is adjacent to the USFS wilderness recommendation area is visually a logical extension of this area. The flat land portion of the South Piney Creek Unit will be dropped. In conjunction with the contiguous USFS lands, the unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation. Overall, the unit meets the criteria required for a W.S.A.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



Recommended as a W.S.A.
Unit No. CO-D50-135

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 1,644 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-135
Area Name Sand Castle

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Great Sand Dunes National Monument-4 Small Tracts (Alamosa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit is composed of four small parcels of public land administered by the BLM. A parcel of public land of 220 acres was added to this unit during the initial inventory. No boundary adjustments were made during the intensive inventory. The total acreage is now 1,644 acres. The parcels are covered by an active grazing lease. All parcels of this unit are contiguous with the Great Sand Dunes Wilderness Area (GSDWA).

NATURALNESS:

The three parcels contiguous with the GSDWA on the west are obvious continuations of the dune area. Like the wilderness area, these parcels are made up of sandy soils with typical low growing dune vegetation such as Indian rice grass and sand drop seed. The largest parcel in section two, contains an active sand dune. The 4th parcel, adjacent to the northern boundary, is located on the side slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. The parcel is cut by two intermittent streams which have carved valleys. The vegetation is the same as the mountain range and the northern portion of the GSDWA. The conifers and pines of this area are in contrast to the low growing brush and grass species found in the dune area. Within the parcels of this unit are two imprints of man. One is a way which runs approximately parallel to the eastern boundary in section two. It is a two wheel rut which is kept open solely by the passage of vehicles. The blowing sands have covered the fence. The fence and the way are considered minor imprints of man.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are found in the unit. The parcels of this unit are a natural and logical extension of the GSDWA because of the similarities of the soils, terrain and vegetation. The opportunities for solitude are inherent in their addition to the GSDWA. The active dunes within the unit offer some screening while the great expanse of land surrounding the major collection of dunes in the center of the GSDWA offer solitude because of its vastness.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are found in the unit. Hiking, horseback riding and photography are common pursuits along the periphery area of the GSDWA. Since the public lands are contiguous in this area, and they are a logical extension because of the similarities of terrain and vegetation, these same pursuits could extend onto the public lands.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

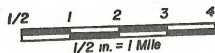
The geologic processes which created the sand dunes within the Great Sand Dunes Wilderness Area is a major tourist attraction in the San Luis Valley.

POSSIBILITY OF RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

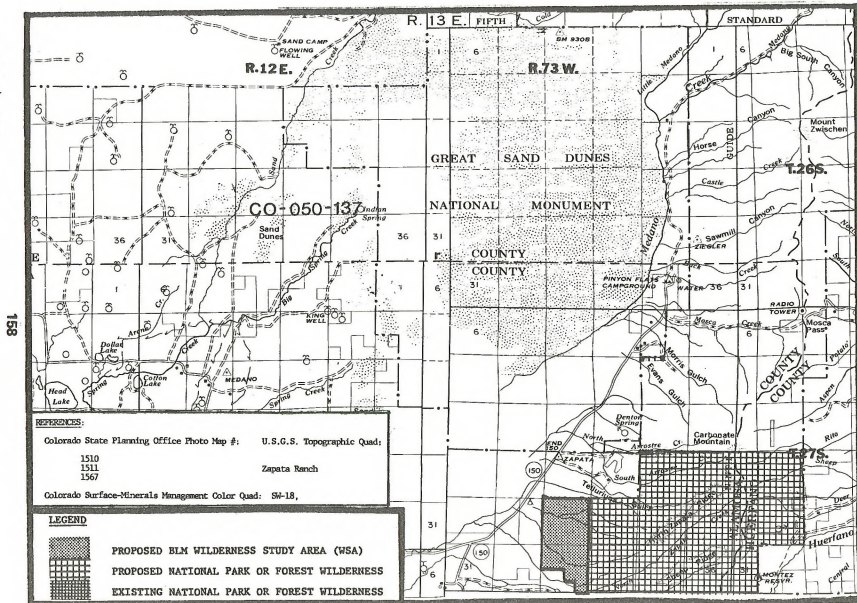
Generally, the imprints of man remaining in the unit, a single way and a fenceline, are returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition by blowing sand.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The parcels of this unit are adjacent to the Great Sand Dunes Wilderness Area. They are visually a continuation of the GSDWA because they are made up of the same type of soils, terrain and vegetation. The parcels retain their natural appearance and contain outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive, unconfined type of recreation in conjunction with the GSDWA.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 1,020 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-137
Area Name Papa Keal

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Rio Grande National Forest (Alamosa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Papa Keal unit contains 1,020 acres of public land administered by the BLM, adjacent to a USFS RARE II wilderness recommendation area (A2-266). There have been no changes made in the unit boundaries either during the initial inventory or the intensive inventory. The Papa Keal unit is covered by an active grazing lease. Documentation of mining claims could not be found. Land outside the unit boundaries is either Colorado State or private lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Papa Keal unit consists of the western facing sideslopes of the lower portion of the San De Cristo Range. The sideslopes lead to lightly rolling land at the base of the mountain. The sideslopes are cut by intermittent streams which originate higher up in the RARE II portion of the Sangre De Cristo Range. The streams in this area create many smaller valleys as they flow to the rolling land at the base. As they reach this portion of the unit many of them combine to form shallow beds. The vegetation on the sideslopes is a transition area from the conifer of the upper Sangre De Cristo Range to the juniper-pine in the lower elevations. The rolling lands at the base contain rabbitbrush and grass species which are found throughout the San Luis Valley floor. An old fence runs through the middle of this unit. It is in disrepair and has fallen over in some places. Another fence runs along the border between the USFS and public lands. This fence is also in disrepair. These fences are wire strand and wood pole fences which blends into the existing color of their surroundings. In the northwest corner of section 28 there is an old log cabin which has been severely damaged by the weather. Because of its log construction it visually fits into the environment. East of this cabin an old stock water tank lies half buried through natural processes. Because of the surrounding trees it can be seen from only a few yards away. The remainder of the unit appears to be in a natural condition without imprints of man.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are found in the unit. The majority of the Papa Keal unit consists of the sideslopes of the foothills of the Sangre De Cristo Range. This portion of the unit is covered by dense piñon-juniper and pine which is a continuation of the forest type found on the upper reaches of this range. Because of this type of vegetation, the contours of the land and the boundaries being adjacent to the USFS wilderness recommendation area, opportunities for solitude abound. The effect of the land contours and vegetation create areas where visitors can be screened from one another within a very few yards.

The size of the unit in conjunction with the USFS area provides many thousands of acres which could contain visitors in privacy. The lower portion of the unit is mostly covered by a very dense growth of piñon-juniper which also provides an adequate cover for screening visitors.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are found in the unit. While the forest cover of this unit is dense, the understorey is clear enough to provide unimpeded hiking opportunities. A visitor can wander throughout the hillsides. The dry streambeds also offer a "stair stepped" approach to the higher reaches of the range. Spotted throughout this area there are overlooks to view and photograph the San Luis Valley or the peaks of the Sangre De Cristo Range. Since this unit is adjacent to USFS wilderness recommendation area the combined acreage is such that backpackers/hikers can wander throughout the Sangre De Cristo Range for days without retracing their route.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No supplemental values are noted in the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The two fence lines, water trough and fallen-down log cabin are considered minor impacts of man. They all can be returned to a substantially unnoticeable condition by either natural processes or by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The slopes of this unit are adjacent to and are a logical extension at the USFS wilderness recommendation area. There are no natural breaks between the two areas. An observer could not distinguish where the USFS and BLM boundary is because of the similarities of the general terrain and the vegetation. With this contiguity with the proposed wilderness, the unit does offer outstanding opportunities for primitive, unconfined recreation and solitude. The unit meets all of the criteria for W.S.A. designation.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 720 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-1398
Area Name Zapata Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Adjacent to Rio Grande National Forest (Alamosa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit consists of two parcels of land administered by the BLM. One is 320 acres, the other 400 acres. No boundary adjustments were made in the intensive inventory. Both units are contiguous with a USFS wilderness recommendation area number A2-266. They are bordered on the west by private lands. This unit is covered by an active grazing lease.

NATURALNESS:

The two parcels of this unit are located on the sideslopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. They are steep with the major valleys of Urraca and Zapata Creeks and Raspberry Canyon cutting through them. Intermittent streams created the valleys. The vegetation on the hillsides is mixed conifer, pine and pinyon with low growing brush species intermixed. To an observer it would not be possible to tell where the USFS managed lands end and the public land begin because of the similarities of the vegetation and the contour of the land. It is visually one unit. The southern parcel of this unit shows no imprints of man. It appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. The northern unit contains a way in Raspberry Canyon used by 4-wheel drive vehicles as an access route into the higher elevations of the Sangre De Cristo Range. This way is primarily a two wheel rut which is kept open solely by the passage of vehicles. The way is deteriorating through natural processes. It is visible only from a short distance on either side of the impact because of the surrounding vegetation and terrain. The remainder of the unit appears to be in a natural state.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

These two parcels, while small in size, contain a varied topography that combined with the vegetation and adjacent USFS land, which is a recommended wilderness area, offers outstanding opportunities for visitors to experience solitude. The dense pinyon-juniper and other vegetation provides screening within a few hundred feet. The valleys created by the stream twist and turn to create a screening affect. Because of these features, outstanding opportunities for solitude are present.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The same features which provide opportunities for solitude also offer outstanding recreation opportunities. Visitors can hike the dry stream beds to the higher elevations of the Sangre De Cristo Range which is a USFS RARE II wilderness study area. Along the hike, visitors are offered spectacular views from points which overlook the San Luis Valley or the peaks of the range they are hiking.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The spring and fall colors of the Sangre De Cristo Range are known throughout Colorado.

POSSIBILITY OF RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The way running through the northern parcel of this unit is a minor imprint of man, and is substantially unnoticeable.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

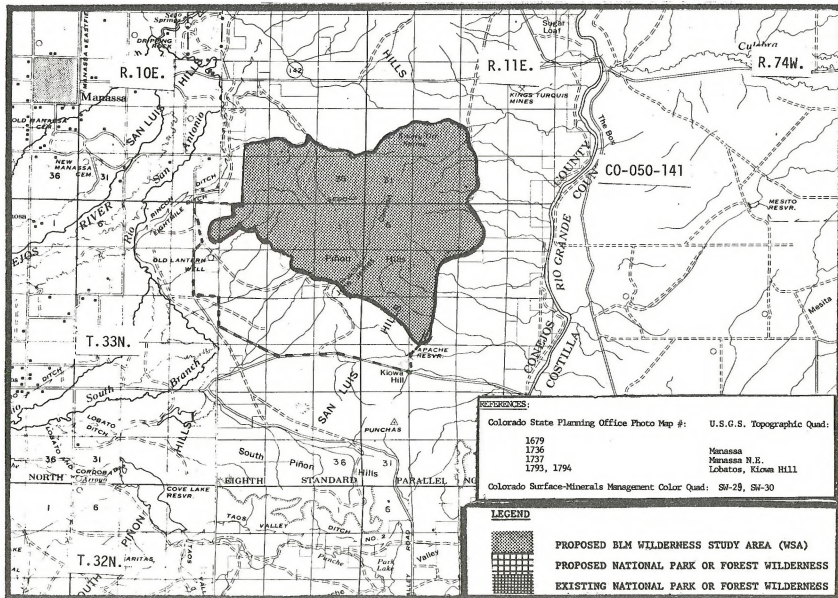
The two parcels of this unit are contiguous with USFS wilderness recommendation area number A2-266. The parcels offer a logical extension of this boundary. The vegetation within this unit is the same as that of the USFS lands while the contour of the lands is an extension of the higher slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Range. The only work of man within the unit is a way along the northern parcel which is rehabilitating naturally and is considered a minor impact. The two parcels of this unit could be considered to retain its primeval character. Overall, the unit meets the criteria of a W.S.A.

1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



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UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,440 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. CO-050-141
Area Name San Luis Hills

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast of Antonito (Conejos County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After boundary adjustments this unit contains 8,440 acres of public land. The unit is covered by an active grazing lease. A boundary adjustment was made during the initial inventory which added 2,300 acres to the unit. This decision was based on a field check of a road in the southwest corner which proved to be a way. The boundary was then extended to a county maintained road. Further adjustments were made during the intensive inventory. Field work found numerous minor imprints of man and one major which was a mining area. The accumulative effect of the minor works of man and the mining activity prompted the boundary adjustment which excludes their impacts. Within the unit boundaries lies a Colorado State land section, which is not included in the wilderness inventory. The unit is bordered by private lands and public lands.

NATURALNESS:

The San Luis Hills unit is a series of hills which rise to 1,000 feet above the San Luis Valley floor. They are covered by low growing rabbit and bitterbrush with occasional clumps of pinon-juniper. Spotted throughout this unit are numerous minor imprints of man. The northeast corner contains two ways which wind towards each other on one of the highest peaks. They both are two-wheel tracks and have been made impassible in areas because of erosion. Also in this general vicinity there are three check dams on an intermittent stream which parallels the northern border. The ways are deteriorating through time while the dams are covered by natural grasses. The western area contains several small check dams, fence lines and a way leading to a mining exploration area. Because of the terrain in this area each of these minor imprints of man are not visible beyond a few yards.

The greatest concentration of impacts of man occurs in the southwest corner. This area contains numerous ways, thirteen stockwater tanks, a water pump in a tin shed (10' x 15' x 9') with a water holding tank (6' x 12') and stock watering tanks. Also there are four fence lines, and a way leading to a mineral exploration area. Individually these minor imprints of man would not greatly detract from the naturalness of this portion of the unit. Collectively however, there is not any place that a visitor can be that works of man are not clearly evident. The mineral exploration area and the metal shed are visible throughout this location creating a noticeable contrast in color. One of the ways which occurs in this portion of the unit leads into John James Canyon. It is a two-wheeled track which deteriorates further into the canyon as it extends. It leads to two small check dams which have grown over with native vegetation and are visible only from a few yards away. Except for the southwest corner, all imprints of man are considered minor. The boundary along the southwest corner has been adjusted to exclude the accumulative effects of man.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are present within the boundaries of this unit. The contouring created by the twisting valleys, such as John James and others, provide areas where visitors to the unit can be screened from one another. Opportunities for solitude also exist within the gulleys along the eastern boundary. Unlike the slopes of the other boundaries, this area has created deep run-off drainages which wind their way towards the Rio Grande River. These gulleys, which vary from 4 to 20 feet, are deep enough to screen visitors from one another because of their depth and numbers.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The diversity of topography offers horseback riding, hiking and backpacking. Numerous valleys create avenues which lead throughout the units. These routes provide many miles of hiking opportunities. The low growing vegetation makes it possible to wander throughout the area. While the north has steep cliffs, the slopes of the rest of the unit are such that they offer access to the highest points and an interesting climb because of the views.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No supplemental values have been voted in the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

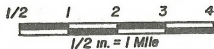
The ways located in the northeast corner and John James Canyon are rehabilitating naturally. The small earth filled dams or fence lines located throughout the unit can be returned to a substantially unnoticeable condition by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

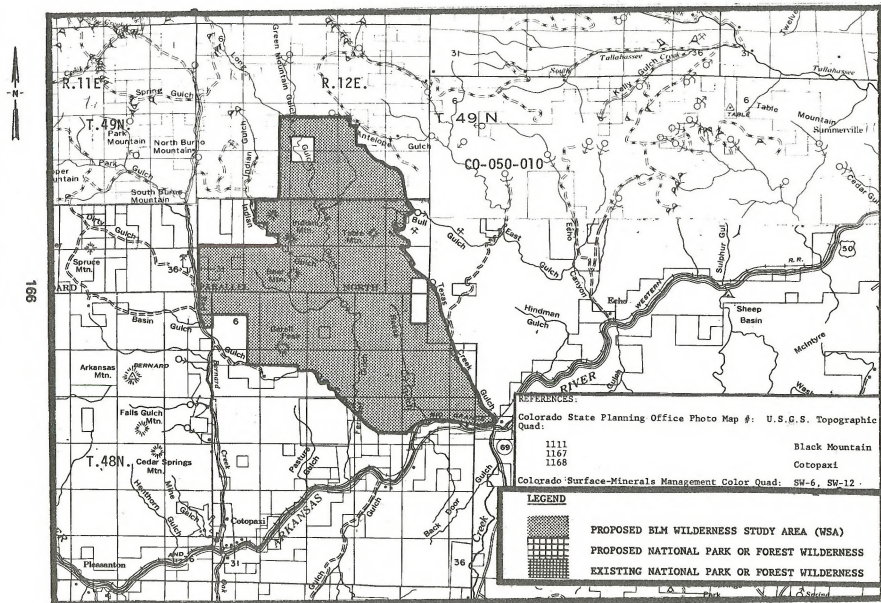
The San Luis Hills unit contains over 8,000 acres of land which retains its primeval character. Some minor impacts of man remain within the new boundaries, but these are either rehabilitating naturally or can be rehabilitated by hand labor. Opportunities for both solitude and an unconfined type of recreation are present within the valleys and hillsides located throughout the unit. Overall, the unit meets the criteria required of a WSA.

CANON CITY DISTRICT

AREAS NOT RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	12,950 acres	Inventory No.	CO-050-010
District	Canon City	Area Name	Bear Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: Approximately 1 mile northwest of Cotopaxi (Fremont County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

No changes were made in the unit boundary in the initial inventory. Two sections of state-owned land totalling 400 acres are within the boundary. While some unpatented mining claims are in the area, there are no active mines. Contiguous lands are a combination of public, private, and state ownership, with the primary use being for mining and grazing.

NATURALNESS:

Topography is steep and rugged with the primary vegetation being pinyon, juniper, and conifer, and an understory of cacti, grasses, and sagebrush. This unit contains many significant imprints of man which are primarily in the form of cut and filled ways, check dams, and mine exploration pits. Some of the ways were originally constructed for logging (little evidence of logging operations remain), mining, or the construction of check dams. The majority of the imprints is very obvious and not well hidden by vegetation or topography. A constructed cut and filled way goes along Reese Gulch for about 2 miles to the beginning of the gulch where it continues over steep topography for an additional 3 miles (approximate) where it meets Texas Creek Gulch. After the way leaves Reese Gulch, it becomes less obvious. Approximately 1 mile up Reese Gulch another very obvious cut and filled way leaves the gulch and parallels another drainage to the dam and wire fence. At the fence line, another cut and filled way goes over a hill and to another check dam. North of the Arkansas River (2.2 miles) along Texas Creek Gulch, the road forks, with Table Mountain Road going to the northwest. From the fork a way parallels the road for about 1 mile, then cuts over a hill and meets Table Mountain Road. Two exploration pits can be seen from this way. The entire 4-mile length of Table Mountain Road is a part of the eastern boundary of this unit. In Sec. 26, T. 49 N., R. 12 E., a way branches off the road and goes west for about a mile and ends at the same fence described earlier. Within one-fourth of a mile of each other along the way are three mine exploration pits approximately 40 feet by 20 feet and 12 feet deep. Since these pits are located in a field, they are very noticeable. Branching from this way on the east side of Table Mountain another cut and filled way goes north for almost 2 miles, then leaves the unit. In Sec. 22, T. 49 N., R. 12 E., are two check dams. In Sec. 7, T. 48 N., R. 12 E., a way goes north from the road in Red Gulch. This cut and filled way continues north to a road in Indian Gulch and is cut and filled. Along this way is a check dam.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The steep topography of the unit, in combination with the many drainages, provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. While vegetation provides some screening it is not an important factor in providing solitude. The blocked configuration of the unit helps insure that outside influences do not compromise opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Reese, Fernleaf, and Long Gulch give good access to the interior of this unit. As a result outstanding opportunities exist for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, and snowshoeing. The varied topography and many vantage points at higher elevations provide outstanding opportunities for sightseeing and photography. In specific, Table Mountain offers a good view of the Sangre De Cristo Range and the general area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

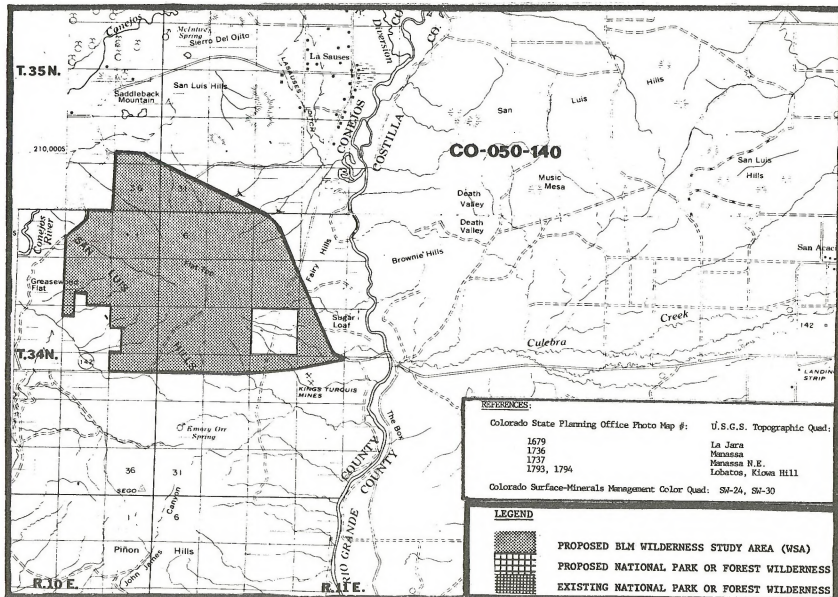
Unit 010 contains no supplemental values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All of the imprints of man discussed under Naturalness are significant. The possibility of any of these imprints being returned to a substantially natural or unnoticeable level would either be too lengthy for a natural process and would require the extensive use of mechanized equipment.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

Bear Mountain Unit is a tract of land, 12,950 acres, which contains all necessary wilderness characteristics except naturalness. The unit shows evidence of a large degree of mining activity (mostly exploration pits) and contains seven check dams and many miles of cut and filled ways which are very obvious and are considered major impacts. In general, because of the extensive detractors from naturalness, Unit 010 does not meet the criteria required to become a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 9,114 acres
District Canon City

Inventory No. 00-050-140
Area Name Flat Top

GENERAL LOCATION: Northeast of Antonito (Conejos County)

SIZE/DIVERSITY:

This unit contains 9,114 acres of public land administered by the BLM, with 640 acres of Colorado State Land inholdings, which are not included in the wilderness inventory. This unit is covered by an active grazing lease and has several mining claims within the boundaries. Adjacent lands include public lands on the north, east and south and separated from them by roads. The west is bordered by private lands and a Colorado school section.

NATURALNESS:

The Flat Top unit is primarily a mesa with corresponding sideslopes. The vegetation is a low growing species such as bitterbrush and rabbitbrush. Minor imprints of man including check dams, ways and fences are scattered throughout the periphery of the unit. They are considered minor because they generally cannot be seen beyond a few yards. A major imprint of man, an active mine, is located in the southeast corner. It is highly visible because of the change of color and the contour of the land.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The lack of topographic variation within this unit creates an almost impossible chance to find solitude. Approximately 50% of the unit is contained in the slightly rolling lands surrounding the mesa. From this area it is also possible to view up to 1/2 of the side slopes which lead to the mesa top. These side slopes are cut by occasional drainages but they are predominantly wide open cuts which do not screen a visitor. Likewise, the rolling terrain located on the mesa top does not provide either enough acreage or variation in the terrain to screen visitors from view. The height of the predominate vegetative species, rabbitbrush, rarely exceeds two or three feet. Therefore it does not provide screening.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The lack of diversity of topography, vegetation and wildlife offers little or no opportunity for a primitive and unconfined recreation experience. The generally flat or rolling terrain around the periphery of the unit would not be appealing to a hiker or horseback rider. The unvaried terrain should also prove disappointing to photographers as would the general lack of wildlife. The unit does receive some antelope hunting but it is not considered to be as productive as the area to the east and south. Likewise, the rolling mesa top does not encourage hikers because of its apparent lack of interesting features. The vegetative patterns appear to be identical throughout the mesa top, sides and valley floor.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

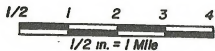
No supplemental values have been noted in the unit.

POSSIBILITIES OF RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

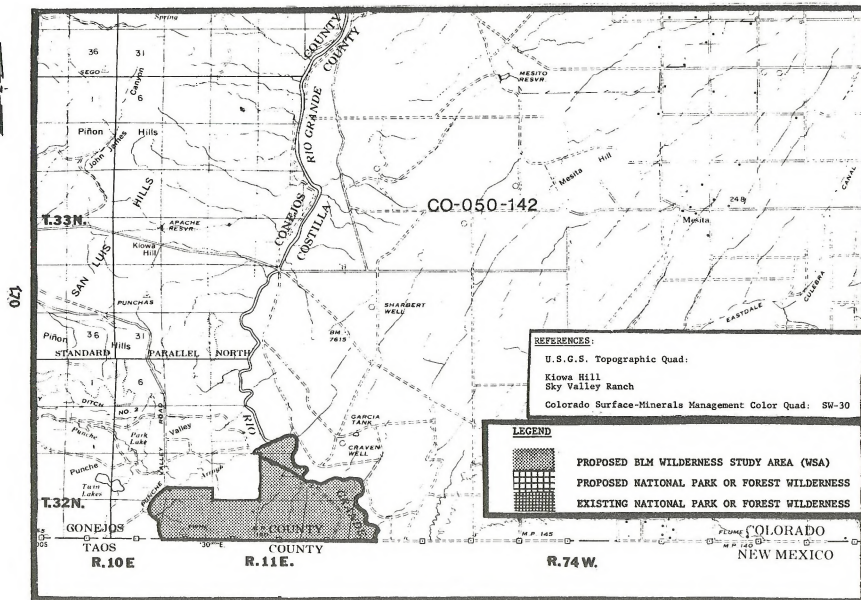
The fence lines, ways and small earth dams found in this unit which were considered minor imprints of man because of their limited visual effect could be rehabilitated through natural process or hand labor. The mining activity which was considered to be a major imprint of man because of the disruption of the natural contour and color of the land could not be rehabilitated through hand labor. Because the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities for solitude or an unconfined type of recreation, the boundary was not altered to omit this area.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Flat Top unit is not recommended as a WSA. Outstanding opportunities for either solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation are not present within the boundaries, due to a generally flat or rolling terrain and the lack of effective vegetative screening. Therefore the unit is dropped from further wilderness consideration.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Canon City District



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	Colorado - 3,300 acres New Mexico - 9,500 acres Total - 12,800	Inventory No.	CO-050-142, NM-010-33
District	Canon City, Colorado Albuquerque, New Mexico	Area Name	Twin Peaks

GENERAL LOCATION: Southeast of Antonito (Conejos County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The total unit contains 12,800 acres administered by the BLM in both Colorado and New Mexico. The Twin Peaks unit has been subdivided into two units because two routes considered originally to be ways have been verified as roads. The BLM administered land in Colorado contained within the two units is separated from the main body of public land in New Mexico. These two units are approximately 800 acres and 3,800 acres. Therefore, the acreage remaining in the wilderness inventory in Colorado is not of sufficient size to satisfy the size criteria and is separated by roads from the remaining acreage in New Mexico still under wilderness review. New Mexico BLM has not completed the intensive inventory of their contiguous lands.

NATURALNESS:

A road which parallels the Rio Grande River separates this unit into two parcels. Originally the road was thought to be a way, but documentation of maintenance by the lessee verifies that it is a road. Another way was verified to be a road in New Mexico. This road parallels the Colorado/New Mexico border and separates the Colorado public lands from the main body of public lands in New Mexico. Other imprints of man within the unit include two fence lines, a wooden stock loading ramp and a pump shed (6' x 6') with a large silver water tank (6' x 12').

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are present within the canyon of the Rio Grande River. The canyon is approximately 100 to 200 feet below the level of the surrounding lands. Because the canyon twists and turns and extends along the entire length of the eastern edge of the unit, visitors could experience solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for a primitive, unconfined recreation exist in this unit. Hiking, photography, rafting and fishing are some of the activities available within the Rio Grande Canyon and River. The river receives thousands of visitors rafting from Colorado to New Mexico.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Rio Grande Canyon provides habitat for various raptor bird species including golden eagles and various hawks.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

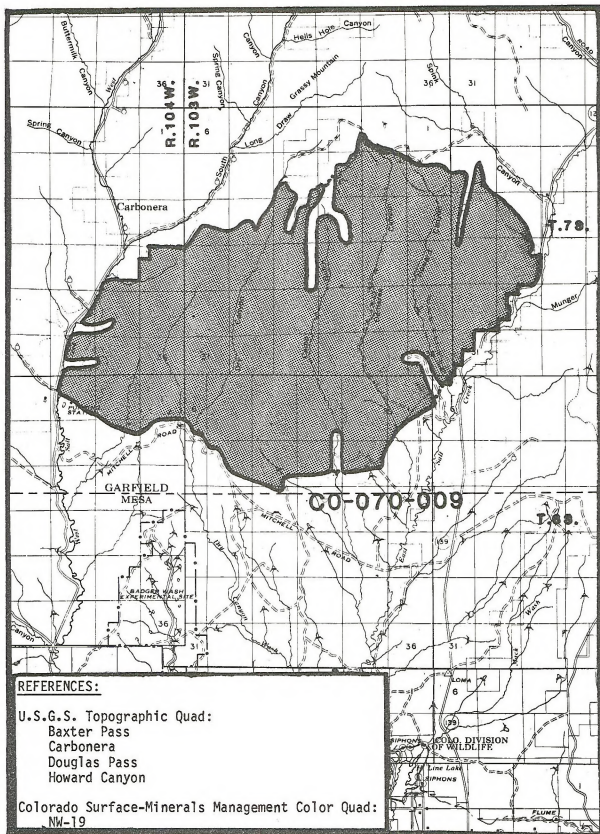
The pump shed and water tank are considered a major imprint of man. These facilities can be seen throughout the unit because of its size and color. Natural processes or hand labor would not be able to return this impact to a substantially unnoticeable condition.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The two roads which separate this unit from the main body of the New Mexico acreage (NM-010-33) create two smaller units of less than 5,000 acres. Additionally, the pump shed and water tank within the unit are considered to be a major imprint of man so that the area is considered not to be natural.

GRAND JUNCTION DISTRICT

AREAS RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	29,890 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-009
District	Grand Junction	Area Name	Demaree Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Twenty-five miles northwest of Grand Junction (Garfield - Mesa Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Demaree Canyon unit contains approximately 29,890 acres of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The unit was not originally proposed for intensive inventory, but based upon public comment and field checks, the unit was found to be roadless and natural, and was therefore added back into the intensive inventory. An error in acreage calculation is why the area has increased in size since the initial inventory. During the intensive inventory the southern boundary was adjusted to exclude two areas of active oil and gas activity. The boundary was also adjusted on the north to exclude a constructed way leading to two abandoned gas wells. The entire unit is leased for oil and gas. Grazing occurs in the area under BLM permit. The surrounding lands are predominately public with some private land along the northern and eastern boundaries.

NATURALNESS:

The Demaree Canyon unit offers a highly dissected topography. The dominate feature is a series of steep-sloped canyons running generally in a north-south direction. The Bookcliffs provide an abrupt break along the southern boundary of the unit. Vegetation is scattered pinyon-juniper and dense mountain brush on the higher elevations and sagebrush and saltbrush in the lower elevations. Minor imprints of man found in the unit include two well screened fencelines, several ways and small stock reservoirs. These imprints are scattered throughout the unit and are screened with vegetation, which makes them substantially unnoticeable. The area appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the highly dissected topography caused by the series of canyons and ridges, and due to ample topographic screening, outstanding opportunities for solitude are present. The large size and blocked configuration of the unit also enhance the opportunities to be isolated from others while in the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are not found in the unit. Hunting is the primary recreational opportunity in the unit. Other activities such as hiking, camping, and wildlife observation could take place but are limited due to the rugged terrain. There are no supplemental values which make the unit unique within the region or that would enhance the primitive recreational opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No supplemental values have been noted to occur in the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Natural revegetation is occurring on the minor imprints of man remaining in the unit. Hand labor could aid the natural processes, however, the imprints are minor in nature and are not substantially noticeable.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Demaree Canyon unit is a large tract of undeveloped public land (approximately 29,890 acres) retaining its natural character. Minor imprints in the form of fencelines and abandoned ways exist in the unit but do not have a significant impact on the unit's naturalness. The highly dissected topography caused by the series of canyons and ridges provides numerous opportunities for solitude. Hunting is the primary recreational opportunity in the unit. Other opportunities include hiking, camping, and wildlife observation. However, none of these activities are considered outstanding because of very rugged topography and lack of significant supplemental values. The unit meets the size, naturalness, and solitude criteria, therefore, it qualifies as a Wilderness Study Area.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 29,600 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-066
Unit Name Little Bookcliffs Wildhorse Area

GENERAL LOCATION: Three miles north of Grand Junction (Mesa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Little Bookcliffs Wildhorse Area contains 29,600 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The proposed initial inventory unit totaled 19,200 acres, however public comment indicated that this did not include all areas that meet the naturalness criteria, so the final initial unit boundary was enlarged to include these areas. The final initial inventory unit contained approximately 43,600 acres. Intensive inventory field checks revealed the presence of several roads and an area that was impacted by coal prospecting activity. Four boundary adjustments deleted these imprints of man. An additional 1,120 acres were deleted in five other boundary adjustments. Approximately 29,600 acres are included in the proposed wilderness study area after all deletions have been made. About one-quarter of the area is under lease for livestock grazing. All of the unit is under oil and gas lease. Two coal leases exist within the unit. The majority of the unit coincides with the Little Bookcliffs Wildhorse Area, which is an area managed to protect a herd of free roaming wild horses.

NATURALNESS:

The southern edge of the unit is dominated by the two-thousand foot high face of the Bookcliffs. The region to the north of this face is a gently upward sloping plateau region that is highly dissected by four major canyon systems. The canyons are generally characterized by steep cliff walls on both sides that are up to a thousand feet deep in places. Vegetation in the canyons consists primarily of big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and fourwinged saltbush. Piñon-Juniper woodlands dominate most of the upland area which is located between the canyon systems. The canyon systems contain only three imprints of man. These are a way into Coal Canyon, a way in Main Canyon, and several short sections of fence in Main Canyon. The lack of any maintenance in conjunction with good revegetation make these ways have a minimal amount of impact on the naturalness of the canyon systems. Several ways, a corral, and a fence line occur on the upland areas of the unit. All of these ways are unconstructed, unmaintained, parallel tire tracks. The corral is made of wood posts and is well hidden amongst the piñon-Juniper forest. All of these imprints are considered to have a minimal amount of impact on the overall naturalness of the upland region.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist within the Little Bookcliffs Wildhorse Area. The large number of canyons within the unit provide many routes for the recreationist to travel, thus enhancing the ability of the recreationist to become isolated from others. The gently twisting formation of the canyons limits the views within the canyons, which increases feelings of solitude. The rolling topography of the upland areas of the unit provides for outstanding opportunities for solitude in that people may pass relatively close to each other without noticing the others presence. This type of topography is easily travelled, which allows people to disperse throughout the uplands. In addition, the dense piñon-Juniper woodlands in the higher part of the unit screen people from each other as a result of the limited view that exists when passing through these trees.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for several different types of primitive recreation exists within the Little Bookcliffs Wildhorse Area. A combination of several landscape factors including, but not limited to, size, topographic diversity, scenic beauty, the presence of a wild horse herd, and numerous different canyon systems, all work to create outstanding opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, backpacking, photography, scenic viewing, and the viewing of wild horses. Outstanding day hiking exists as a result of easy access into the heads of several canyons. The outstanding scenic beauty in conjunction with the presence of the wild horse herd offers outstanding opportunities for photography and wild horse observation while participating in hiking. Backpacking opportunities are outstanding as a result of the large number of traversable canyon systems, all of which provide access to the upland portions of the unit. The ruggedness of the unit provides the backpacker with a high degree of challenge, which enhances the experience of backpacking. The viewing of the outstanding scenic beauty as well as the wild and free roaming horses, additionally enhances the opportunities for backpacking.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

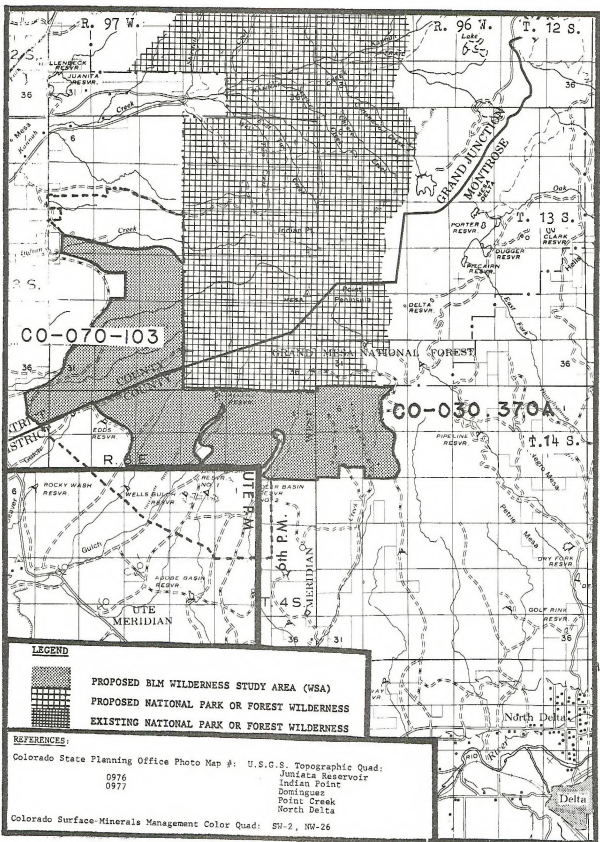
Several supplemental values exist in the unit, the predominant one being the presence of 65-100 wild horses. Cultural values of the Fremont culture are found here, as well as several natural bridges and hoodoos. The unit is in close proximity to Grand Junction, Colorado.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man which occur within the Little Bookcliffs Wildhorse Area are considered to have minor impact on the naturalness of the unit. Therefore, no special rehabilitation measures are needed.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The 29,600 acres within the Little Bookcliffs Wildhorse Area is of sufficient size to make practicable its use and preservation in an unimpaired condition. These imprints of man that occur within the unit are considered minor, therefore, the area is considered to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. The unit's overall size, scenic beauty, and topographic diversity provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. The unit additionally contains several supplemental values that add to the overall wilderness character of the unit. This area meets all of the criteria for a Wilderness Study.



1/2 1 2 3 4 180

1/2 in. = 1 mi.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Montrose District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	Grand Junction District - 4,600 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-103
	Montrose District - 6,640 acres		CO-030-370A
	Total - 11,240 acres	Area Name	Kannah Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Eight miles northwest of Delta (Mesa - Delta Counties).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Kannah Creek consists of 11,240 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Initially, the combined acreage of Kannah Creek consisted of 13,100 acres. Public comment in conjunction with field checks resulted in a final initial inventory unit boundary which consisted of 30,451 acres. Intensive inventory field checks of this large area revealed the presence of several roads and areas significantly impacted by the workings of man. A road was found near Alkali Creek that dissected the area, and resulted in a designation of a new area (CO-070-370B), the Adobe Badlands. Similarly a road and an irrigation ditch in the northwestern part of the area created a division, which resulted in the creation of another new area (CO-070-370A), Kannah Creek North. Approximately 1,800 acres located between Kannah Creek and Kannah Creek North were deleted since this area contained several constructed roads which significantly impacted the naturalness of the area. Acreage was deleted along the southern edge of the area due to the cumulative impact of numerous ways, which considerably reduced the naturalness of this portion of the unit. The U.S. Forest Service Kannah Creek RARE II area consisting of 29,650 acres is contiguous to the Kannah Creek area, forming the northern and northeastern boundary of the unit. The U.S. Forest Service Kannah Creek Area was recommended for wilderness designation for RARE II. Roads and private lands form the eastern boundary. The area is covered by oil and gas leases. Grazing also occurs in the unit by B.L.M. permit.

NATURALNESS:

Kannah Creek is characterized by steep mountain slopes dropping off of Grand Mesa. These slopes are cut by periodic drainages which are separated by numerous mesa-like formations. The upper elevations of the area are characterized by a dense cover of piñon-juniper trees, while grasses, shrubs, and cacti typify the lower area. Imprints of man within the unit include several ways, a couple of fence lines, three small wildlife guzzlers and a way which was initially constructed in parts but is no longer maintained. All of these imprints are considered to be substantially unnoticeable and do not impair the overall naturalness of the area. These imprints are all screened by the dense piñon-juniper woodland and diverse topography. Overall, the area appears to be primarily natural in character.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Kannah Creek contains several landscape features that are conducive to outstanding opportunities for solitude. The area's relatively large size (11,240 acres) in association with the contiguous 29,650 acres in the Kannah Creek RARE II Area provides a large area to become isolated from others. The natural screening created by the diverse topography and dense piñon-juniper woodlands provides numerous opportunities for solitude, since these landscape features tend to isolate visitors from one another, thus enhancing solitude opportunities.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist in Kannah Creek as a result of the area's size, vegetation patterns, and topographic diversity. Hiking, backpacking, hunting, nature study, photography, horseback riding, and sightseeing are some of the primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities available in Kannah Creek. The wide range of topography and diverse vegetation enhance the opportunities available here. In addition, the adjacent Forest Service RARE II land further expands the scope of recreation opportunities available in the area. The combination of the above factors provides for outstanding primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities in the Kannah Creek area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

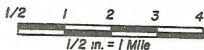
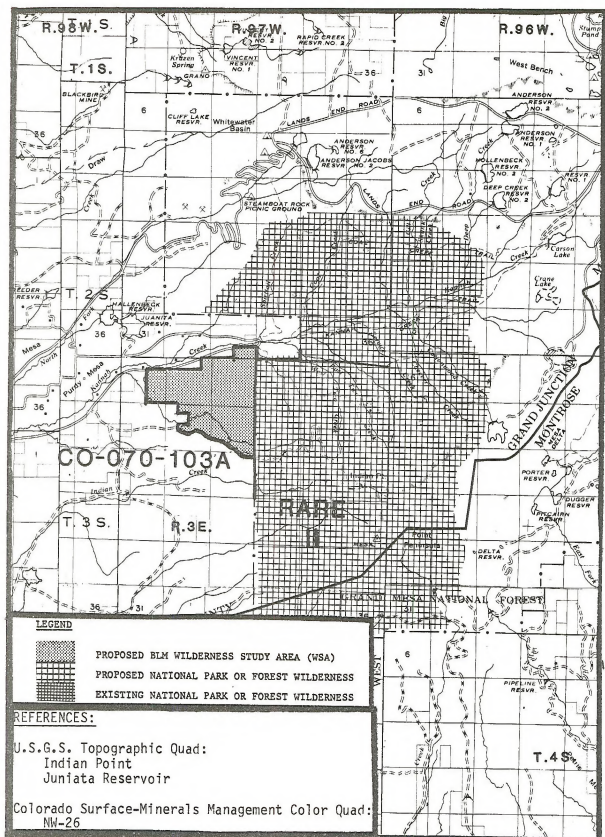
Units CO-070-103/CO-030-370A possess several supplemental values including geologic interpretive values, cultural and wildlife values, and riparian zones. The area is a big game winter concentration area. Deer and elk are common here and antelope can also be observed in the lower elevations. Also, the area is within easy driving distance of Grand Junction and Montrose.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are no major imprints of man within the unit that would require rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The area is of sufficient size (11,240 acres) to make practicable its preservation in an unimpaired condition. This unit is also contiguous with the Grand Mesa National Forest Kannah Creek RARE II Area (29,650 acres) proposed by the Forest Service for wilderness designation. The rugged terrain and diverse vegetation of the area provides for outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation. The unit also contains supplemental values in the form of geologic, cultural and wildlife values, and riparian zones. The unit meets all of the criteria required of a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 2,100 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-103A
Area Name Kannah Creek North

GENERAL LOCATION: 18 miles southeast of Grand Junction and three miles northwest of Delta (Mesa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Kannah Creek North Inventory Unit, CO-070-103A includes 2,100 acres. It is contiguous to the 29,650 acre Kannah Creek RARE II Area. Therefore, the size requirement for W.S.A. is met by this contiguous U.S.F.S. RARE II Area. During the initial inventory, the Kannah Creek North Unit was part of the Kannah Creek Inventory Unit, CO-070-103. The final initial inventory boundaries were modified to delete lands because of a misinterpretation of private property boundaries and to add additional lands to the west that field checks showed to be natural. Property boundaries were private lands, roads and the U.S.F.S. boundary. During The Intensive Inventory, this unit was separated from CO-070-103 by an unnatural section heavily impacted by roads. Boundaries are now roads, private property and the Grand Mesa National Forest boundary. All lands in the unit are public lands administered by the BLM. Grazing permits and oil and gas leases cover the unit. There are no easements or rights-of-way in the entire unit. No mining activity is taking place.

NATURALNESS:

The unit forms part of the western slope of the Grand Mesa and is made up of adobe hills, and east-west ridges and valleys. Vegetation is primarily pinyon-juniper in the upper elevations and desert shrub in the lower elevations. Imprints of man are generally absent in the unit except for a bladed fenceline and 3-strand barb wire steel post fence along the western boundary. The degree of impact to the unit from the fenceline is minimized by the pinyon-juniper cover which provides effective screening.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The unit alone does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude due primarily to small size and limited vegetative and topography screening. However, this unit is contiguous to the 29,650 acres U.S.F.S. RARE II Kannah Creek Area. Opportunities for outstanding solitude in the adjacent RARE II Area are enhanced by the size and additional vegetative screening in CO-070-103A.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities to experience primitive and unconfined recreation are not present in this unit due to the unit's small size and the barbed wire fence forming the administrative boundary of the unit between the BLM and the USFS. However, outstanding opportunities do exist in the contiguous U.S.F.S. RARE II Kannah Creek Area which includes 29,650 acres. The current boundary fence prevents unconfined movement into CO-070-103A from the RARE II Area but this fence could be easily removed. Kannah Creek North's acreage, vegetation transition, scenery, and landscape variety would enhance outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking, photography, and nature observation in the RARE II Area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

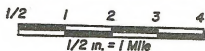
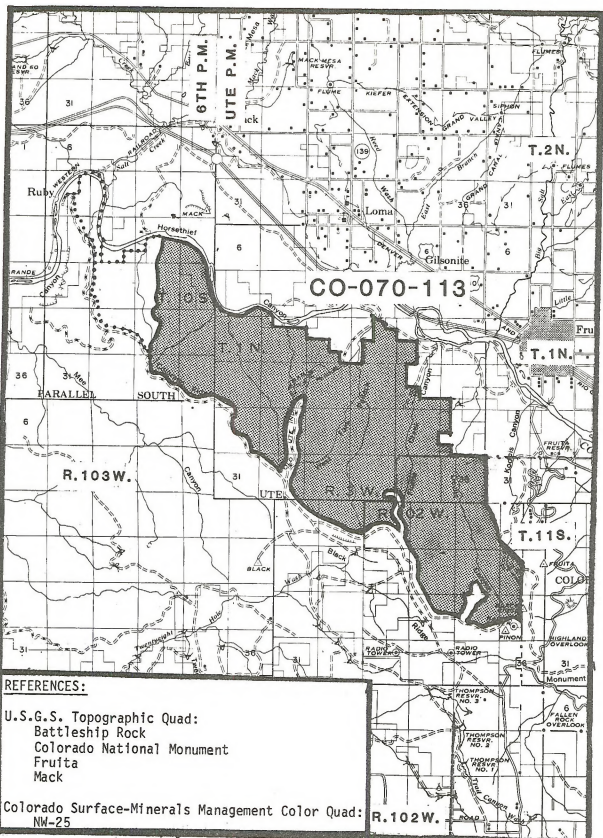
The unit contains geological interpretive, wildlife, and cultural values. Additionally, it is only 18 miles from the Grand Junction area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

A 3-strand, barbed wire fence with steel posts along a bladed fenceline create a moderate impact on naturalness. Visibility of this fenceline is limited in the unit because pinyon and juniper trees screen it from view. This fence could be removed by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The unit's small size of 2,100 acres would normally disqualify it from consideration as a W.S.A.. However, it is contiguous to the 29,650 acre RARE II Kannah Creek Area which was recommended by the U.S.F.S. for wilderness designation. The unit is free of man's imprint except for a boundary fence between U.S.F.S. and BLM lands. This fenceline has been bladed but its impact on naturalness in the unit is only considered moderate. The fenceline could be removed with hand labor. Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are not present in CO-070-103A due primarily to size. However, when the adjacent RARE II Area is considered, CO-070-103A does have outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The unit's acreage, scenery, and landscape variety do enhance the outstanding opportunities occurring on the contiguous RARE II Kannah Creek Area. Supplemental values include geologic interpretive potential, wildlife, and cultural values. Also, it is very close to Grand Junction, a major western slope population center. Because it enhances the wilderness character of the RARE II Kannah Creek Area, CO-070-103A is recommended as a W.S.A..



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 18,150 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-113
Area Name Black Ridge Canyons

GENERAL LOCATION: Ten miles west of Grand Junction (Mesa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Black Ridge Canyons unit consists of 18,150 acres of public land, all of which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. During the initial inventory, unit CO-070-113 was divided into two separate units when a field check uncovered the presence of a road. The intensive inventory resulted in further adjustments totaling approximately 2,250 acres when more roads were discovered in the western portion of the unit. None of the unit is under oil and gas lease, although all of the unit is currently under grazing permits. A series of mining claims are located in the southeastern corner of the unit. There are approximately 3,140 acres along the Colorado River which are withdrawn for reclamation and water power projects. The unit is bounded by a mixture of public and private lands on all sides but the west, where BLM inventory unit CO-070-113A is located.

NATURALNESS:

The Black Ridge unit consists of a high ridge on the southern side of the area off of which drain six major canyon systems. These canyons drain in a northerly direction down into the Colorado River, which forms the northern boundary of the unit. Sloping mesas which have a rolling, hillock type of topography occur in between each of the canyons. The vegetation of the unit consists of an open pinyon-juniper woodland with occasional clearings composed of sagebrush and various species of grass. Vegetation within the canyon systems consists of scattered pinyon-juniper woodlands in the broad, open areas; grassy meadows in the canyon bottoms; and various riparian species such as willow and cottonwood. Imprints of man which are included within the unit include stock reservoirs, fence lines, tar paper shacks, and several ways. All of these imprints of man are considered to be minor. Overall, these imprints of man have a minimal degree of impact on the naturalness of the unit. This unit appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature and as such is considered to be primarily natural.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Overall, the Black Ridge Canyons Unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. The large number of canyon systems within the unit serve to horizontally disperse people throughout the unit without concentrating large numbers of people into certain preferred areas. Side canyons and amphitheatres allow people the opportunity to isolate themselves from the main parts of the canyons. Opportunities for solitude within a single canyon system are further accentuated by vertical isolation due to benches at various levels within a single canyon. The relatively open expanses on the mesa tops additionally offer outstanding solitude in that people can become widely separated on a horizontal basis due to topographic and vegetative screening. Additionally, the unit's large size and broad configuration greatly increases the probability of people being able to isolate themselves from one another.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are found in the unit. Topographic diversity; unusual landforms such as arches, spires, and windows; and intermittent water ways all provide high appeal to the day hiker. Outstanding opportunities for day hiking are further accentuated by the presence of many unique geologic features. The thirteen known natural arches in the unit have an appeal to the day hikers as well as the backpacker. Opportunities for floatboating down the Colorado River are excellent. Many people float the river for the purposes of gaining access into the canyons, fishing, picnicking, camping and general scenic viewing. The different types of primitive recreation which can also occur within the unit include horseback riding, deer hunting, fishing, bird watching, scenic viewing and the study of archaeological and paleontological sites.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Black Ridge Canyons unit contains several significant supplemental values. Approximately 54,000 people live in the Grand Valley within an hour's drive of the area. A rare butterfly, the *Papilio indra minor* is known to inhabit the area. Two endangered fish species occupy the section of the Colorado River located within the unit. These are the Humpback Chub and the Colorado Squawfish. The Razorback Sucker, which is protected by Colorado state legislation also occurs in this section of the river. Active golden eagle nesting sites exist within the area. This portion of the Colorado River has been recommended for scenic designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Thirteen known natural arches are located in the unit. Evidence of habitation by the Desert Archaic, Fremont, and Ute Indian cultures occur throughout the area. The area also contains significant paleontological resources.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

None of the imprints of man which occur within the unit are considered to have a significant impact on naturalness. Therefore no special rehabilitation measures are needed.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The Black Ridge Canyons Unit is a relatively large tract of land (18,150 acres) that is primarily natural in character. Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist as a result of the large number of canyons in conjunction with the rolling topography of the upland areas, that serve to isolate people on a horizontal and vertical basis. Vegetative screening also enhances the opportunities for solitude, as does the unit's relatively large size and its broad configuration. Outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking, scenic viewing, and photography exist within Black Ridge as a result of the area's outstanding scenery and landscape variety. The area also contains several significant supplemental values which include proximity to a large urban population, several rare and endangered animals, wild river values, thirteen natural arches, evidence of habitation by Desert Archaic, Fremont, and Ute Indian cultures, as well as paleontological values. The Black Ridge Canyons area meets all of the criteria necessary for a Wilderness Study Area.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size CO - 49,190
UT - 5,100
Total - 54,290

Inventory No. CO-070-113A
UT-060-116
UT-060-117

District Grand Junction, CO
Moab, Utah

Area Name Black Ridge Canyons West/Jones Canyon
Wrigley Mesa

GENERAL LOCATION: Fifteen miles west of Grand Junction (Mesa County, Colorado; Grand County, Utah)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Black Ridge Canyons Unit contains approximately 54,290 acres of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The area described in this report is the combination of three separate initial inventory units. These include the 49,190 acre Black Ridge Canyons West Unit (CO-070-113A) in Colorado and the Utah units of Wrigley Mesa (UT-060-116) and Jones Canyon (UT-060-117), totalling 2,700 acres and 2,400 acres, respectively. Three boundary adjustments have been made as a result of intensive inventory field checks, deleting 110 acres. Field checks showed that the road separating UT-060-116 and UT-060-117 was in fact a way, therefore these two units are no longer divided. None of the unit is currently under oil and gas lease. No leases occur in the Colorado part of the area as a result of a M.F.P. decision, (Management Framework Plan-BLM planning system) which emphasized the protection of the area's recreational and scenic values. All of the unit is leased for livestock grazing. No mining claims or rights-of-way are known to exist in the unit. To the north and south of the unit lie a mixture of public and private lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Black Ridge Canyons Unit is located on the sloping northeast edge of the Uncompahgre Plateau. The unit consists of a series of deep canyon systems which dissect the plateau. Vegetation within the canyon bottoms consists of piñon-juniper woodlands, grassy meadows, and riparian types of vegetation in the moister areas. The mesas are relatively flat with small drainage channels occurring throughout. Vegetation on the mesas is dominated by piñon-juniper woodlands and occasional sagebrush parks. No imprints of man occur within the canyons systems of the area. Several ways, some stock reservoirs, and a few fence lines occur on the mesa tops, all of which are considered to have a minimal impact on the naturalness of the unit, due to vegetative and topographic screening. The unit is essentially natural in character and is affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Overall, the Black Ridge Canyons Unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. The large number of canyon systems serve to horizontally disperse people throughout the unit without concentrating large numbers of people into certain preferred areas. Large side canyons and amphitheatres allow people the opportunity to isolate themselves from the main parts of the canyons. Opportunities for solitude within a single canyon system, such as Mee and Knowles, are further accentuated by vertical isolation due to benches at various levels within a single canyon. The relatively open expanses on the mesa tops additionally offer outstanding solitude in that people can become widely separated on a horizontal basis due to topographic and vegetative screening. Additionally, the unit's large size and broad configuration greatly increase the probability of people being able to isolate themselves from one another.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist within the Black Ridge Canyons Unit based on outstanding scenery and landscape variety, interesting geologic features, three major canyons, the Colorado River, and cultural and paleontological resources. These outstanding opportunities include backpacking, hiking, scenic viewing, photography, and horseback riding. Opportunities for floatboating down the Colorado are outstanding, with access readily available from the Grand Junction area. Fishing, camping, and picnicking are also enhanced by the river. The variety of wildlife, including large game offers the opportunity for hunting and wildlife photography.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

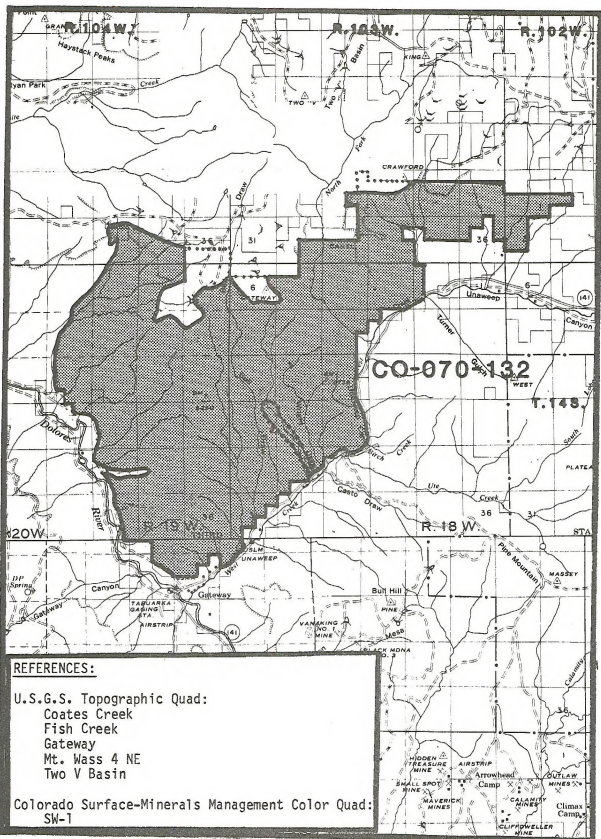
Several supplemental values can be found in the unit, including its close proximity to Grand Junction, and the presence of several endangered species of wildlife, geologic features and cultural values. Several fish and a rare butterfly (*Papilio indra minor*) are known to inhabit the area. A portion of the Colorado River included in the unit is presently being considered for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Numerous natural arches are found in the unit. Evidence indicates that the area has a rich prehistory.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

None of the imprints of man which occur within the unit are considered to have a significant impact on naturalness. Therefore, no special rehabilitation measures are needed.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Black Ridge Canyons Area is a large area consisting of 54,290 acres. The area is primarily natural in character. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation exist within the area. The large number of canyon systems in conjunction with dense vegetation on the intervening mesa tops creates an environment where people can easily become separated from each other. Outstanding opportunities for backpacking, hiking, scenic viewing, and photography occur as a result of the area's outstanding scenic beauty, topographic diversity, and unique geologic features. In addition, the area contains several significant supplemental wilderness values which include proximity to a large urban population, the presence of several rare and endangered fish, wild river values, interesting geologic features such as natural arches and rock spires, as well as cultural sites from the Desert Archaic, Fremont, and Ute Indian cultures. The Black Ridge Canyons area meets all the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 26,120 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-132
Area Name The Palisade

GENERAL LOCATION: North of Gateway (Mesa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit contains 26,120 acres of public land administered by the BLM. While no boundary adjustments were made in the initial inventory, 1,580 acres were excluded in the intensive inventory. Field checks revealed several imprints of man having a major impact on the unit's naturalness. These included a brush removal, several roads, structures, powerlines and fences. The remaining 26,120 acres are essentially natural in character. Land ownership bordering the unit is a mixture of public and private lands, with BLM wilderness inventory unit CO-070-132A lying to the west. Approximately eighty percent of the unit has been leased for oil and gas, several grazing allotments are contained in the unit, and a number of mining claims exist.

NATURALNESS:

This unit is characterized by vertical cliffs, deep rugged canyons, and rolling to flat desert valley bottoms dissected by gulches. The higher elevations consist of open, sloping to flat grasslands and meadows with moderate to heavy stands of intermixed piñon, juniper, and oak brush. The upper drainages contain some aspen and ponderosa pine, and some riparian vegetation exists along North Fork. The lower elevations have piñon-juniper and desert shrubs. The imprints of man that exist within the unit are either of minor impact, well screened, and/or are dispersed enough so as to cumulatively or singly be substantially unnoticeable leaving the entire unit affected primarily by the forces of nature. These imprints include the remains of an old sawmill, several ways in the east, several fence lines and corrals in the west, and a short way on Pinon Mesa leading to an empty reservoir.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The Palisade offers outstanding opportunities for solitude primarily due to topographic screening in the many gulches and canyons in the lower elevations. The heavy vegetative screening and difficult accessibility of the upper elevations enhances opportunities for solitude. A feeling of spaciousness occurs because of the outstanding views one is exposed to on top of the unit. Because of the numerous isolated pockets in the lower areas, one is also able to experience intimate solitude. The blocked configuration of the unit enhances opportunities for solitude by insuring that outside influences will not disrupt feelings of seclusion.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Palisade unit provides a rugged and varied landscape in which to hike, backpack, sightsee, horseback ride, climb, hunt, trap, fish, photograph, or study nature. Scenic views of the LaSal Mountains in Utah are excellent. The hiker or backpacker is presented with a high degree of challenge and risk due to the variety and steepness of the terrain in parts of the unit. In addition, the hiker is constantly exposed to outstanding scenery both within and outside the unit. Opportunities exist to view and photograph the fritillary butterfly in one of the two critical habitats in Colorado. Hunting and trapping are considered fair to good in the unit. Fishing is considered excellent for brook and rainbow trout in the North Fork of West Creek. Overnight camping areas for backpackers are plentiful. Perennial water is also available in part of the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Palisade, the rocky spine that cuts the unit north and south, is one of the most prominent features of the Dolores River Valley. It and many of the other rock features in the unit such as the hoodoos lend themselves well to interpretation. The most significant value is the presence of a rare butterfly, *Nokomis fritillary* (*Speyeria nokomishokomis*). This butterfly is presently being considered for classification under the Endangered Species Act (1973). The habitat in use is in the southeastern corner of the unit and is one of two such habitats in the state. Approximately 75 percent of the butterfly's critical habitat in Unaweep Canyon is within the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

There are no significant impacts in this unit, therefore special rehabilitation measures are not needed.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Palisade area is a relatively large area consisting of 26,120 acres and is affected primarily by the forces of nature. Outstanding opportunities for solitude occur within the area as a result of the topographic screening that exists in many of the gulches and canyons. Dense vegetation in the higher elevations also enhances the opportunities for solitude. Opportunities for several types of primitive recreation are also considered to be outstanding. Several supplemental values exist within the area. These include outstanding scenery, interesting geologic features, as well as winter habitat for deer, elk, and golden eagles. The Palisade area meets all of the criteria necessary for recommending the unit as a Wilderness Study Area.

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size Montrose - 47,490
 Grand Junction - 31,990
 Total - 79,480

Inventory No. CO-030-363, CO-070-150

District Montrose, Grand Junction

Area Name Dominguez Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Thirteen miles west of Delta (Mesa, Delta and Montrose Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

This unit consists of the combined Grand Junction (CO-070-150) and Montrose (CO-030-363) Districts Dominguez Canyon Inventory units. The combined acreage is 79,480 acres of public land administered by the BLM. There are 600 acres of state land inholdings within the unit but this area is not included in the inventory unit acreage nor is it inventoried for wilderness characteristics. Two boundary adjustments have been made in the intensive inventory to exclude a road (an exclusion of six acres) in Big Dominguez Canyon which provides access to mining claims, and to exclude a way and two chained areas in Wild Horse Draw—a total of 1,006 acres. The entire area is leased for grazing and portions are leased for oil and gas. There are patented mining claims within the unit, mostly in Big Dominguez Canyon. It is surrounded by a mixture of public, private and National Forest lands.

NATURALNESS:

This unit is characterized by two major canyon systems draining northeast off the Uncompahgre Plateau into the Gunnison River. These drainage patterns have contributed to the formation of isolated northeast-southwest trending mesas. Vegetation ranges from riparian vegetation and Douglas fir in the canyons to piñon-juniper woodlands with sage glades on the mesas. The mesas within the unit appear to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. Most of the imprints of man which do occur on the mesas are minor in that individually they affect only a small portion of the unit. Rolling topography in conjunction with dense piñon-juniper vegetation reduce the visibility of the man-made imprints within the unit. Except for several minor modifications, both of the canyon systems appear to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. Several ways occur on the lower benches above these canyons. All of these have a minimal impact on the overall naturalness of the unit since each imprint is relatively small in size and is generally visible from only a small portion of the entire unit. The character of the Dominguez unit is influenced primarily by the forces of nature. The cumulative imprints of man appear substantially unnoticeable when viewed in the context of the entire unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Topographic screening is provided by the deep, rugged canyons and by steep-sided isolated buttes. The dense piñon-juniper woodland which covers much of the unit provides vegetative screening. From the glades and ridges on the mesas, the vast views of distant mountain peaks, plateaus and valleys impart a feeling of spaciousness while the deep canyons create feelings of seclusion and isolation. These combined factors provide outstanding opportunities for solitude within the Dominguez Canyon unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The highly scenic Dominguez Canyons provide easy-to-moderate hiking and riding routes. More challenging cross-country routes are available throughout much of the rest of the unit which is characterized by rugged tributary canyons, isolated buttes and steep-sided mesas. Rock climbing is possible on many of the canyon walls and rocky ledges. The presence of perennial water in the Dominguez Creeks enhances the recreation opportunities in the unit. Other recreation pursuits available within the area are hunting, cross-country skiing, photography and sightseeing. The high scenic quality and diversity of topography within the unit provide for outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

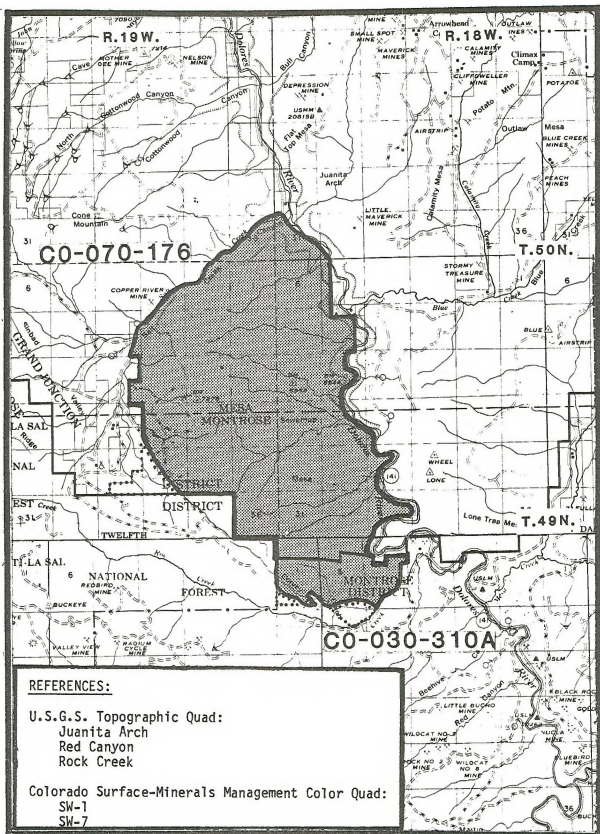
Erosion has exposed seven sedimentary strata and a precambrian bedrock of schist, gneiss and granite. This presents a period of geologic history dating back 600 million years. Numerous geomorphic features such as hoodoos, alcoves and sheer-walled canyons are also visible in this unit, creating a geologically and scenically interesting environment. This unit is also rich in fossilized bones (from the late Jurassic Period) which include portions of the largest dinosaur ever found (Ultrasaurus). The unit contains three rare and endangered plant species and a variety of archeological sites.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Two ways require rehabilitation to reduce their impact on the naturalness of the unit. A way on Triangle Mesa and portions of a way on McCarty Bench have noticeable benchcuts whose visual impact could be reduced by hand labor (minor earthwork and reseeded).

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The combined acreage of contiguous inventory units CO-030-363 and CO-070-150 is 79,480 acres—sufficient size to make practicable its use and preservation in an unimpaired condition. The area is primarily natural in character with some minor imprints of man consisting mainly of ways and range management projects such as stock ponds, fences and corrals. With the exception of two ways, the imprints of man which are present within the unit do not substantially impair the naturalness of the area. The two ways which are moderately noticeable could be returned to a natural condition by hand labor and natural rehabilitation. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are present within the unit due to the rugged and scenic nature of the area's canyons and mesas. The unit also contains several supplemental values which enhance the wilderness quality of the area. Combined units CO-030-363/CO-070-150 meet all the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	Grand Junction - 17,480 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-176
	Montrose - 1,660 acres		CO-030-310A
	Total - 19,140 acres		
District	Grand Junction, Montrose	Area Name	Sewewup Mesa

GENERAL LOCATION: Eleven miles south of Gateway (Mesa - Montrose Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Sewewup Mesa unit contains approximately 19,140 acres of federal land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Two inventory units are included in this area, CO-070-176 from the Grand Junction District and CO-030-310A from the Montrose District. The boundaries of the unit have remained unchanged during the initial inventory, although three boundary modifications have since been made, when it was found that portions of the unit were either not primarily natural or they had a road separating them from the main body of the unit. About one-tenth of the unit is under grazing permit and roughly half of the unit is leased for oil and gas. Several mining claims exist in the Sinbad Valley portion of the unit, however, no mining is currently taking place. The unit is surrounded mostly by public land, with some private land on the eastern, western, and southern borders.

NATURALNESS:

The Sewewup Mesa unit consists of two prominent geologic features; the sloping mesa top of Sewewup Mesa and the fringes of the collapsed salt dome of Sinbad Valley. Most of the Sinbad Valley portion of the unit consists of a landscape sloping down off of the cliff face which surrounds Sewewup Mesa. Vegetation in Sinbad Valley consists of a combination of piñon-juniper woodlands and sagebrush flats with open, grassy meadows. Sewewup Mesa is an isolated mesa top with sheer cliff faces that are five to seven hundred feet high. The mesa top is highly dissected by numerous shallow canyon systems. Piñon-juniper woodlands are the predominate vegetation type of the mesa top. Most of the imprints of man are located in the Sinbad Valley portion of the unit. All three of the ways that occur in this area are considered to have a minimal impact on the naturalness. The upland area of Sewewup Mesa contains no imprints of man and is considered to be a pristine natural environment.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The Sewewup Mesa unit contains outstanding opportunities for solitude. The presence of numerous drainages on the mesa creates a landscape in which people can become dispersed without encountering other people. Outstanding opportunities for solitude are intensified by the rolling topography of the mesa top. The dense piñon-juniper woodland on the upper part of Sewewup Mesa also enhances opportunities for solitude. The presence of a sheer cliff wall around most of the mesa top also adds to the solitude of the unit since it provides an almost impassable barrier to the outside world. The physical size of the area is the main factor which enables this unit to contain outstanding opportunities for solitude in that it provides a large area in which people are free to roam.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Sewewup Mesa unit contains outstanding opportunities for day hiking, backpacking, scenic viewing, natural study, and technical rock climbing. The high degree of landscape diversity created by the numerous drainages flowing off Sewewup Mesa provide an interesting landscape that is attractive to the day hiker and the backpacker. Other interesting features such as the extensive outcroppings of slickrock and the prominent Entrada Knolls in the northwestern corner of the mesa also add to the ability of the landscape to provide outstanding opportunities for these types of primitive recreation. The diversity of vegetation types within the unit also adds to the hiking or backpacking experience. This unit also contains outstanding opportunities for technical rock climbing on the Wingate cliff faces that surround most of Sewewup Mesa.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

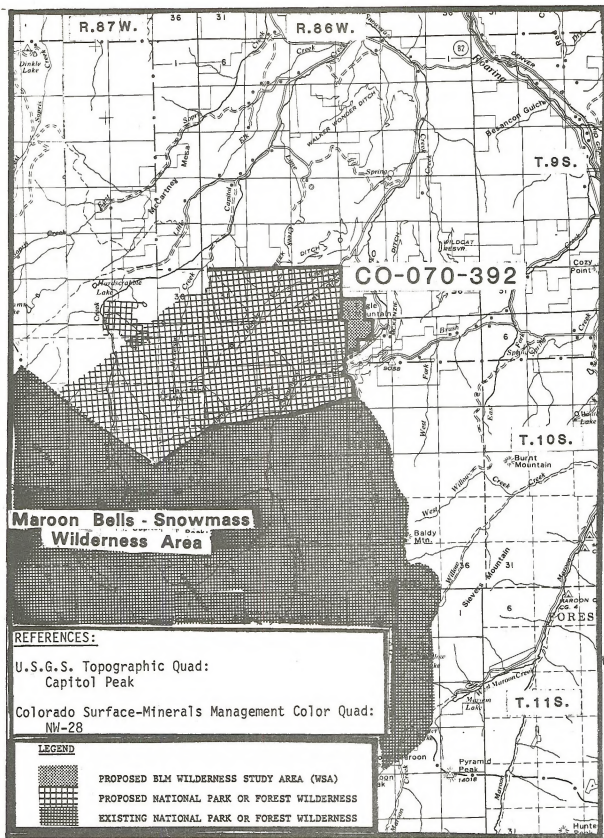
Several significant supplemental values exist within the Sewewup Mesa unit. Sewewup Mesa derives its name from the rustling practices of the McCarty gang. The unit also contains archaeological values. The collapsed salt dome of the Sinbad Valley portion of the unit provides an example of an uncommon geologic feature. Sewewup Mesa is also one of the last areas in this region which represents an ecosystem undisturbed by the workings of man.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man which occur within the confines of the area are considered to have a minor impact on the naturalness.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The combined acreages of contiguous inventory units CO-070-176 and CO-030-310A is 19,140. The area is very natural, being affected primarily by the forces of nature. Outstanding opportunities for solitude occur within the area as a result of the gently rolling topography of top of the mesa, the relatively dense piñon-juniper woodland, and the relative difficulty of access onto the top of the mesa. Opportunities for day hiking, backpacking, scenic viewing, nature study, and technical rock climbing are outstanding. The scenic landscape helps to provide outstanding primitive recreation opportunities. The unit additionally contains several supplemental values which include the cultural, geologic and ecological values. This unit meets all of the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 330 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-392
Area Name Eagle Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: South of Glenwood Springs, northwest of Aspen (Pitkin County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After boundary adjustments to omit sections of a maintained road, approximately 330 acres of roadless and natural land have been identified. The U. S. Forest Service has recommended land adjoining the unit on the west and south in their RARE II study for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. If the proposed RARE II lands adjoining this unit are designated as wilderness, management of the land within the Eagle Mountain unit as part of the wilderness would be practical.

NATURALNESS:

The Eagle Mountain unit consists of steep terrain and fairly dense aspen, spruce-fir vegetation which appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature. The only imprint of man, a rail corral, is substantially unnoticeable due to the dense aspen vegetation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The intensive study area of the Eagle Mountain unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude by itself due to the topography which consists of a steep rise to the top of Eagle Mountain and the small size of the unit. However, when considered with the land to the west in the Forest Service's RARE II proposal, the unit is a logical extension of a large tract of natural land possessing outstanding opportunities for solitude as there are no physical barriers (topographic or vegetative) separating the two areas.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Due to the small size, steep topography, and dense vegetation of the unit, outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation do not exist solely within this unit. Sightseeing and photography are the most valuable primitive recreational activities available in this unit. Opportunities for hiking and hunting are available but due to the extreme steepness and small size, they are not considered outstanding. However, the unit is a logical extension of a large area possessing outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation with no physical barriers separating the two areas.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

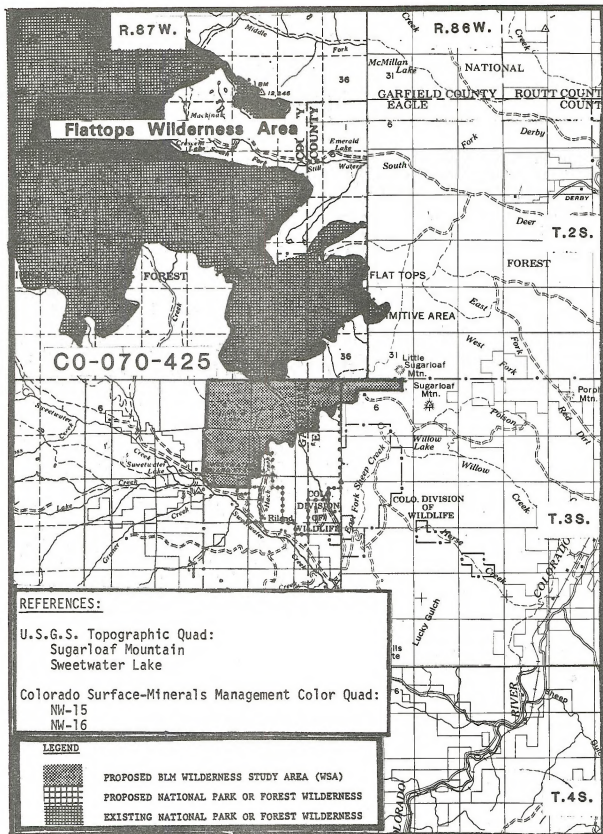
The unit adjoins U. S. Forest Service lands that have been proposed in their RARE II study for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The only impact within the intensive study unit is minimal. The corral could be removed by hand labor.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The Eagle Mountain unit by itself does not meet the criteria for wilderness designation due to its steep terrain and small size; however, in conjunction with the adjoining area the Forest Service proposed in its RARE II study, it would meet the necessary qualifications. This area possesses all the criteria for wilderness. The unit is a logical extension of the RARE II proposals with no physical or man-made barriers separating lands within this unit from the RARE II area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 3,360 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-425
Area Name Hack Lake

GENERAL LOCATION: 60 miles northeast of Glenwood Springs (Garfield - Eagle Counties)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Hack Lake Unit includes 3,360 acres of land administered by the BLM. A state wildlife area is contiguous to the east. The unit is divided into three grazing allotments. Two stock driveway withdrawals exist in Sections 1, 2, and 12 but the areas have not been used for these purposes in recent years.

The unit adjoins the Flattops Wilderness Area to the north administered by the U.S.F.S. and access to the wilderness area from the Hack Lake Unit exists via the "W Mountain" trail. The unit is of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and management as wilderness in conjunction with the existing wilderness area.

NATURALNESS:

The Hack Lake Unit contains diverse forms of topography and vegetation. The terrain ranges from rolling hills (7,600 feet) to steep cliffs (11,034 feet). Vegetative patterns include dense aspen and spruce-fir forests intermixed with grass and wildflower meadows in the northern portion. Oakbrush, pinyon-juniper and sagebrush occur in the southern portion. The major imprints of man have been excluded during the intensive inventory. The remaining land is relatively unaffected by man's works with only a few minor modifications such as pack trails, cabins and fence lines most of which blend with the surroundings and are sufficiently screened by dense spruce-fir and aspen vegetation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the rolling to steep topography of the unit, numerous cliff tops and stream drainages, outstanding opportunities for solitude do exist. Vegetative screening is an important factor adding to the feeling of solitude. The dense spruce-fir and aspen vegetation covers most of the unit, making it difficult to distinguish any other individuals or sounds. Atop the ridges and cliffs as well as from many points along the Ute Trail, perceptions of spaciousness are offered from the panoramic views, also contributing to feelings of solitude. The opportunities for solitude offered in this unit further enhance those available in the adjoining Flattops Wilderness Area.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present in the Hack Lake unit. The varied topography, diverse vegetation and wildlife, abundance of water, several access trails and ways all contribute to opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, photography and sightseeing. The "W Mountain" trail provides additional access from the unit into the Flattops Wilderness Area. The outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation available in the Hack Lake unit further enhance those opportunities present in the adjoining Flattops Wilderness Area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

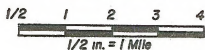
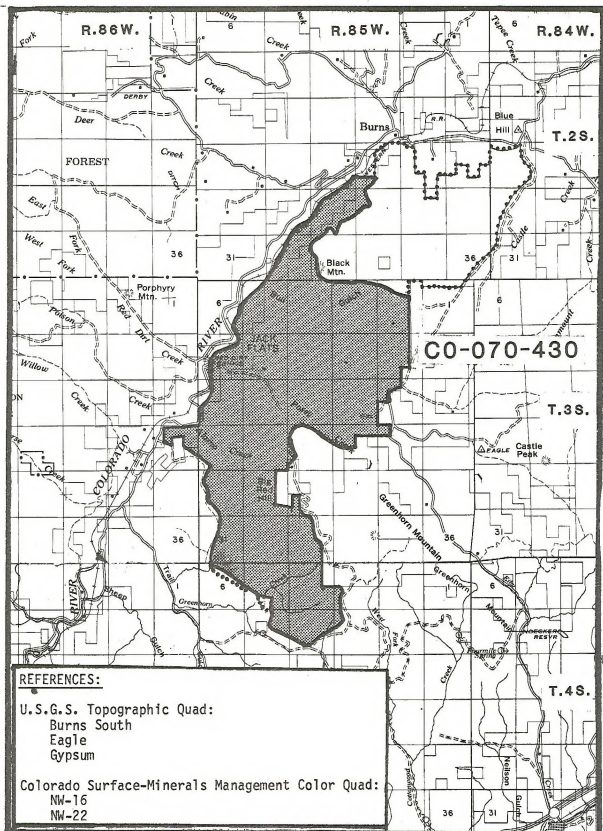
The unit possesses educational and scenic values due to the exposed lava flow along the Ute Trail and opportunities for wildlife observation. Ecological significance is demonstrated in the transition from the dry sage/oakbrush environment to moist swamp areas and aspen/fir. The log cabin and corral by Hack Lake may be of some historical interest. The "W Mountain" trail provides a viable route between the unit and the existing Flattops Wilderness Area to the north. The unit is located 1 1/2 hours from Glenwood Springs and adjacent to Sweetwater Resort, where guides and outfitters are based.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The primary impacts occurring within the unit are three fence lines and two cabins. The rail fences blend in well with the surroundings but the barbed wire fence lines create a contrast to the immediate area. However, the dense spruce-fir and aspen together with the rolling topography provide effective screening from a distance. The imprints of man adjacent to the cabins could be easily rehabilitated by hand. The cabin and corral are not out of character with the primitive setting.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The unit appears to be in a predominantly natural state with the existing imprints of man being substantially unnoticeable. The unit possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude as well as for primitive and unconfined types of recreation. The unit is less than the required size, consisting of only 3525 acres. However, the northern boundary of the unit adjoins an existing wilderness area. Access to this wilderness area from the Hack Lake unit is possible via the "W Mountain" trail, therefore, it appears practicable to manage this unit for wilderness values. It is recommended as a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 15,000 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-430
Area Name Bull Gulch

GENERAL LOCATION: North of Gypsum and I-70; borders along Colorado River south of Burns (Eagle County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

During the intensive inventory, thirty acres were deleted from the southern portion of the unit due to a seven foot high game exclusion fence; and 6,700 acres were deleted from the northern portion of the unit due to the high intensity of ways in an area isolated from the rest of the unit by a natural barrier. Approximately 15,000 acres of land remain in the unit making it of sufficient size to preserve in a primarily natural state. All lands within the intensive study area are public lands administered by BLM. The lands to the west along the Colorado River are withdrawn or reserved for powersites. Railroad and telephone rights-of-way are located along the river in T. 3 S., R. 85 W.. Several oil and gas leases exist throughout the area. Livestock grazing is permitted on seven allotments in the unit. Mineral activity includes silver and gold placers along the river and potential for uranium and moss rock.

NATURALNESS:

The Bull Gulch unit consists of steep, harsh terrain characterized by deep, narrow canyons and gulches. Minor imprints of man occur along the eastern and southeastern boundaries such as ways, fences, reservoirs, developed springs and an irrigation ditch but remain substantially unnoticeable within the intensive study unit due to natural revegetation and vegetative screening produced by the aspen and pinyon-juniper. A few dead end ways enter from the western boundary, all creating minor impacts to the natural state of the area. The majority of the unit appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Due to the varied topography with numerous gulches and ridgetops rising from 6,400 feet to 9,700 feet, the Bull Gulch unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. Bull Gulch, Posey Creek, Alamo Creek and associated drainages are all conducive to solitude. The pinyon-juniper in the western portion and aspen, spruce-fir in the eastern portion provide effective screening of other individuals and sounds.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Due to the diverse terrain, vegetation and wildlife, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present in the Bull Gulch unit. Unique geological formations, topographic variation, the wide range of wildlife and extreme ecological transition all contribute to the opportunities for sightseeing, photography, climbing, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, backpacking, camping, fishing, rafting, canoeing, kayaking and snowshoeing. The quantity of recreational opportunities available as well as their associated quality provides this unit with outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

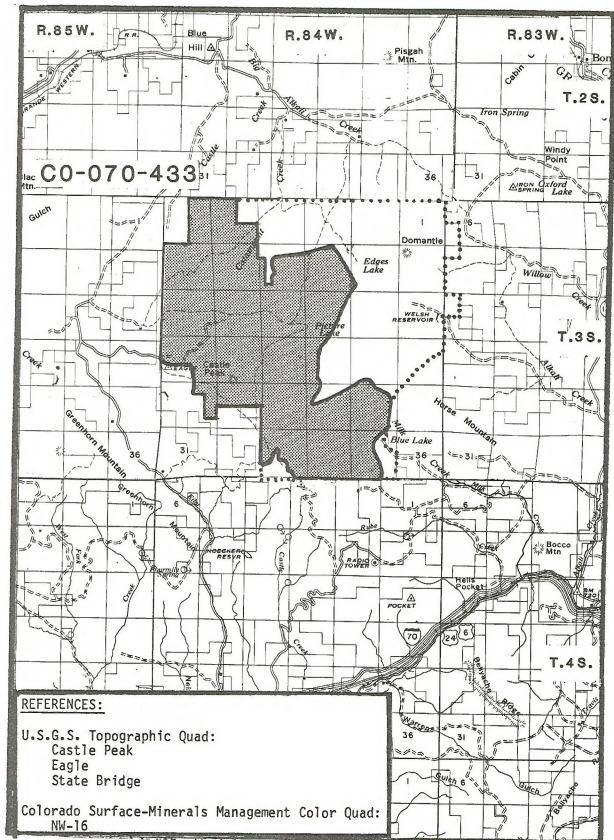
Geological, educational and scenic interest is provided by the unusual pinnacle and geological formations along the Colorado River. The diversity of ecosystems through the unit offers ecological and educational significance. The presence of prairie falcon and bald eagle nests, the possibility of the presence of mountain lion, and existing deer and elk winter range add supplemental values. The Colorado River enhances the scenic qualities of the unit as well as providing additional access to the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Because of the size and varied topography of the unit, the remaining impacts within the intensive study unit are minimal. All are capable of returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition by either natural processes or hand labor. The ways, reservoirs and irrigation ditches have already begun to rehabilitate by revegetation.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Bull Gulch unit is of sufficient size and is primarily natural land with only a few minor imprints of man, most capable of rehabilitation. Outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation do exist as well as several supplemental values. Therefore, the unit meets the criteria of a WSA.



1/2 1 2 3 4
 200
 1/2 in. = 1 mile

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 12,000 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-433
Area Name Castle Peak

GENERAL LOCATION: North of Eagle, Northwest of Wolcott (Eagle County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Approximately 6,500 acres, most of it located in the northeast corner, were eliminated due to the existence of numerous roads, ways, fences, irrigation ditches, and ponds that detracted from the naturalness. After boundary adjustments, approximately 12,000 acres of land are contained in the Castle Peak unit, making it of sufficient size to preserve and use in a primarily natural state. All lands within the unit are administered by the BLM. The unit is bounded by private lands to the west and south and a mixture of private and public lands to the north and east. Numerous oil and gas leases exist throughout the unit. Grazing allotments cover most of the unit. Potential for uranium exploration exists but no activity is presently occurring.

NATURALNESS:

The Castle Peak unit varies from gently rolling slopes (8,000 feet) to rocky vertical cliffs (11,275 feet). A diversity of vegetation and wildlife is found throughout the unit. Within the intensive study unit, only one major imprint of man exists, a fenceline, capable of rehabilitation. This fenceline consists of a 4-strand barb wire fence with bright orange four foot posts. The fence is very visible within the unit. A few minor modifications of man occur, but most of the land appears to remain in a relatively natural state.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The varied topography of the unit containing several peaks above 10,000 feet in elevation offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. The dense spruce-fir forest and aspen stands that cover most of the unit provide an excellent barrier to other sights and sounds within and outside of the unit. The size and blocked configuration further enhance opportunities for solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist in the Castle Peak unit due to the wide variety in the topography, vegetation, and wildlife. The pack trails, ways, creeks, unusual rock formation of Castle Peak and diverse plant and animal life all contribute to opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horse-back riding, snowshoeing, photography, sightseeing, bird watching and hunting.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unusual basalt formation of Castle Peak and the diverse topography and vegetation provide outstanding scenic and ecologic values. The unit is located within a 30 minute drive from Wolcott.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

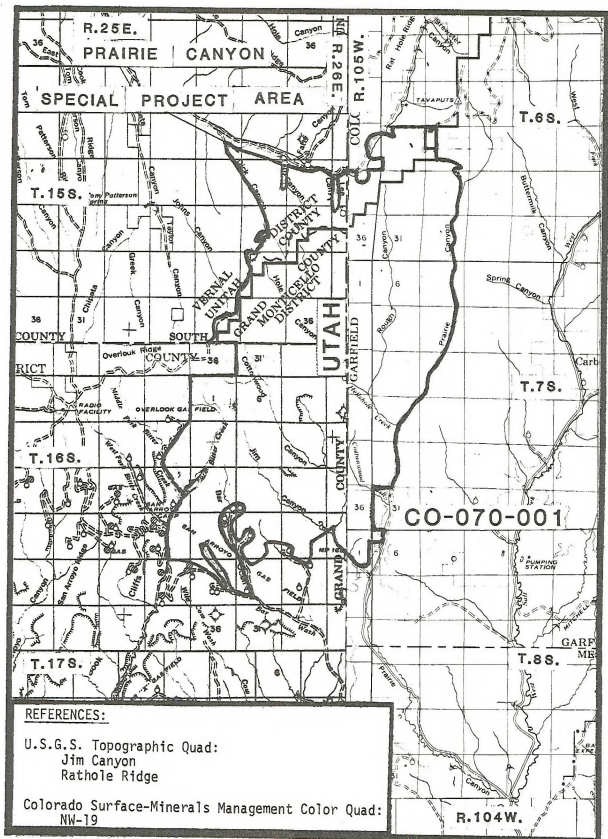
The major impact occurring in the intensive study unit is a fenceline which could be easily removed with hard labor. The remaining impacts are minimal and will either rehabilitate naturally or are substantially unnoticeable due to effective vegetative screening.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The intensive study unit does possess all the qualities to meet the criteria for wilderness. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are present as well as some supplemental values. Rehabilitation potential of the few impacts of man is feasible. Therefore, the Castle Peak Unit, CO-070-433, does meet the criteria for a Wilderness Study Area.

GRAND JUNCTION DISTRICT

AREAS NOT RECOMMENDED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS



204

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	Colorado - 10,200 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-001
	Utah - 17,700 acres		UT-060-110
	Total - 27,900 acres		
Districts	Grand Junction, CO		
	Craig, CO		
	Moab, UT		
	Vernal, UT		

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Due to oil and gas conflicts, an accelerated inventory was done on this unit in 1979 with the Utah State Director announcing the results on August 17, 1979. Utah took the lead on the accelerated review because a major part of the acreage was in Utah. The unit includes 17,700 acres of public land administered by BLM in Utah and 10,200 acres of public lands administered by BLM in Colorado. Initial inventory boundaries for the Utah portion of the unit are the same as the final intensive inventory boundaries. Initial inventory boundaries in Colorado were along the ridgetop in the eastern part of the unit. During the intensive analysis, the Colorado boundaries were realigned to be contiguous to roads, fingerprints of man and private property. Utah boundaries followed similar boundary divisions. The entire unit is under oil and gas lease, oil and gas development on part of these leases has been determined to be a grandfather right under Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. Grazing in the unit is by BLM permit. There are no known mining claims in the area. Public and private lands surround the unit. Utah state school sections occur within the unit and have an acreage of 1,400; however, these were not considered in the BLM wilderness review. Additional school land lies along the western boundary.

NATURALNESS:

Topography consists of a series of northwest-southeast trending canyons and ridges. Vegetation is primarily piñon-juniper woodlands with sagebrush at the lower elevations. Mountain brush and some Douglas fir occur at the upper elevations and heads of canyons. Two ways, a corral, a fence, and a trailer do have minor impact on part of the area, but overall the unit is natural with man's work substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude, while present in Prairie Canyon, are not considered to be outstanding. Opportunities for spatial and intimate solitude in Prairie Canyon are characteristic and typical of the Book Cliffs as a region and therefore outstanding opportunities to experience solitude are not present in the unit. Spatial solitude is found primarily on the higher ridge tops while intimate solitude is found in canyon bottoms, on side slopes, and within piñon-juniper woodlands and isolated fir stands; however topography and vegetative screening in general permits views into canyons, onto ridges, and along canyon bottoms and ridge tops.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for hiking, backpacking, scenic viewing, nature study, photography, wildlife viewing and hunting exist within the unit. However, none of these opportunities are considered outstanding primitive recreational opportunities. Hiking and backpacking opportunities are somewhat limited due to the narrow, thick brush-covered canyons and steep topography. A variety of wildlife is in this unit, all characteristic of the Colorado Plateau. No major concentration of animals or noteworthy species are present. An undetermined amount of deer hunting does take place in the fall.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

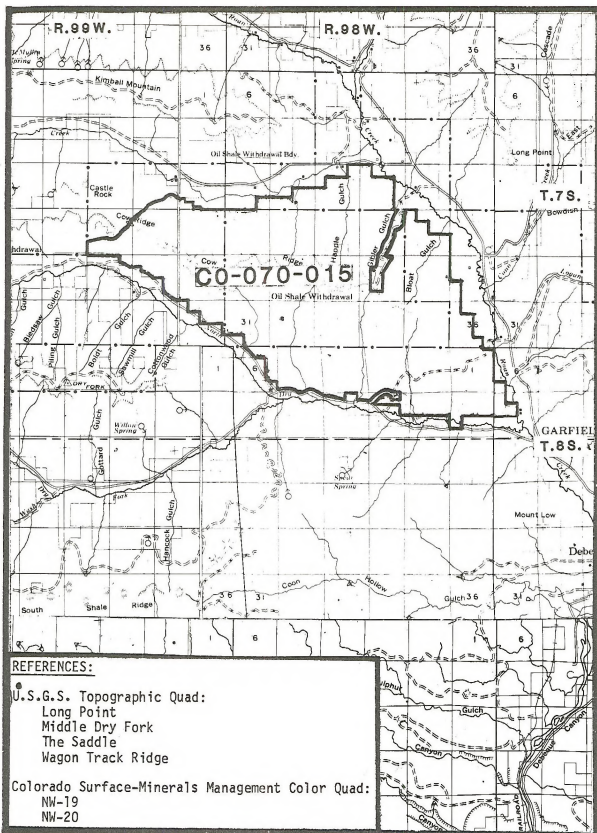
Two natural bridges occur within the unit. One has a 100-foot span and the other has a 15-foot span. No other special values are known to occur in the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The majority of the unit appears substantially natural. The trailer at the mouth of Hell's Hole Canyon could be towed away by its owner and the disturbed area rehabilitated and reseeded.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Prairie Canyon unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation and therefore was not recommended as a W.S.A. by the Utah State Director on August 17, 1979. During the following 30-day public review period, various public comments were received. Approximately half of the comments did not specifically address the wilderness inventory criteria, although they generally agreed with the BLM findings. Comments specific to the unit primarily addressed the presence or absence of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. The comments which disagreed with not proposing the unit as a WSA, did not provide sufficient information to show that outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation do exist. Therefore, the Utah State Director announced his decision to drop the Prairie Canyon unit from further wilderness consideration in the December 5 Federal Register notice. A 30-day protest period followed this date but was not completed at the time this document was prepared.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 17,120 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-015
Area Name Cow Ridge

GENERAL LOCATION: Twenty miles north of Grand Junction (Garfield County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit contains 17,120 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Some boundary adjustments were made in the initial inventory, deleting approximately 2,010 acres in the northwestern portion of the unit. During the intensive inventory, 380 acres were omitted to exclude several major imprints of man; a large barrow pit, three roads, some wildlife thinning areas, and a utility line. The remaining 17,120 acres are essentially natural in character. Eighty acres of private land inholdings are located in the unit, but are not being inventoried for wilderness characteristics. Land ownership outside the unit boundaries is private on the north, south and east; to the west lie public lands administered by the BLM. Oil shale withdrawals are concentrated in the central portion of the unit and several mining claims are located in the northern portion. The entire unit is covered by a grazing permits.

NATURALNESS:

The Cow Ridge unit varies in topographic features from rolling hills to near vertical cliffs and badlands formations to an 8,200 foot grassy ridgetop which runs the entire length of the unit. The forces of nature are readily apparent in the grey shale-colored cliffs and bluffs which exhibit the effect of the erosional forces that shaped Cow Ridge. Vegetative patterns change from sagebrush, piñon-juniper on the lower elevations in the periphery of the unit to Douglas fir and mountain mahogany on the north facing slopes of the ridge. After the recommended boundary adjustments are made the unit appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. Only minor imprints of man remain. Some of these imprints are old ways that penetrate into the unit primarily from the northern and southern boundaries. Also included in the unit are three reservoirs, some drainage modifications work, and fence-lines. These imprints are well screened by dense vegetation and a rolling topography and are substantially unnoticeable.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Primarily due to its narrow configuration, the relatively flat topography of the ridgetops, and the steep sloping rugged topography on the side of the ridge, the unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. These factors make seclusion difficult from the sights and sounds of others within the unit, and restrict the area available for experiencing solitude. Solitude does, however, exist in localized pockets throughout the unit, primarily in the gulches between the ridgeline where vegetation and topography can screen viewers from each other, as well as on the dense piñon-juniper areas on the unit's periphery. Because these areas occur in only isolated locations, these opportunities cannot be considered outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for experiencing primitive and unconfined recreation are present in the unit, but these are not considered to be outstanding. The steep walled slopes of the ridge comprise a large part of the unit and make hiking extremely difficult. In addition, the dense mountain mahogany and gambel oak growth inhibit movement. The narrow configuration of the remaining lands surrounding the ridge (from the base of the slopes to the unit boundary) further confines movement, since private land lies to the north and south.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

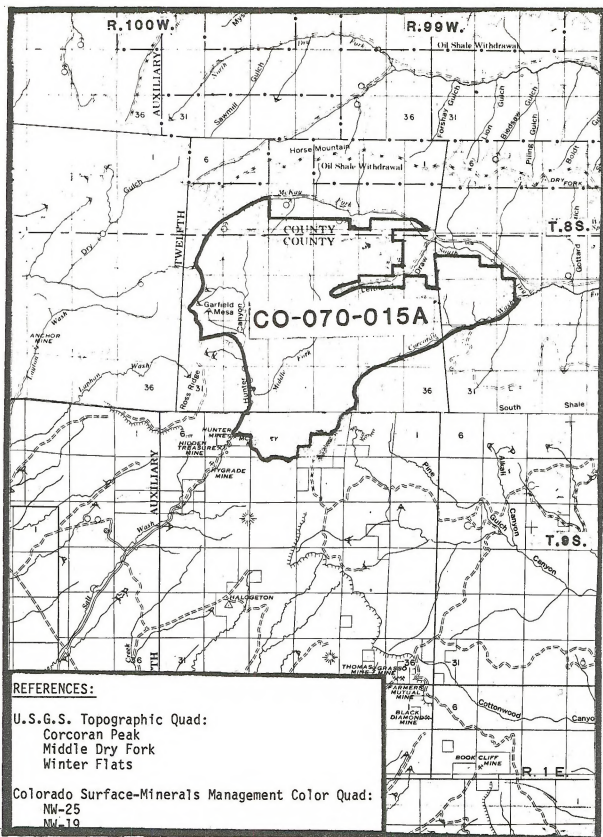
Many scenic views of lands outside the unit are evident from several viewpoints. To the north are the rugged shale and sandstone cliffs of Kimball Mountain and to the southeast are the Roan Cliffs and Grand Mesa which provide interesting scenic views. Located in Gibbler Gulch are the remains of an historic lumber milling operation that could offer educational perspective to the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man located in the area have a minor impact on naturalness, therefore, no special rehabilitation measures are needed.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Cow Ridge area is of sufficient size (17,120 acres) and is primarily natural in character, with only minor imprints of man occurring in the unit. Opportunities for solitude are not considered to be outstanding as a result of the relatively flat topography on the ridgetop, steep slopes on the side of the ridge, as well as the unit's narrow configuration. Opportunities for primitive recreation are limited by the extreme topography of the area, which inhibits the freedom of movement within the area. The unit's narrow configuration also reduces recreation opportunities. The remains of an old timber mill dating from the early part of this century exists in the area. This area does not meet all of the criteria necessary for a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 13,000 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-015A
Area Name Hunter Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Twenty miles northwest of Grand Junction (Mesa County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The initial inventory unit boundaries were drawn to roads, spring developments, gas wells, a pipeline, ways which were considered a major imprint of man and tracts of private property. One slight boundary adjustment was made in the intensive inventory to omit two active adjacent reservoirs. No additional acreage was added. Grazing leases cover most of the unit while oil and gas leases cover the entire unit. No known mining claims or easements are known to exist. After all boundary adjustments were made the unit contains 13,000 acres of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Land ownership outside the unit boundaries is private on the north and a mixture of private and public lands on the east and south. All lands adjacent to the western boundary are public lands.

NATURALNESS:

The Hunter Canyon unit varies in topographic features from rugged steep canyons in the west to an 8,000 foot mountainous type escarpment in the east. The forces of nature are very apparent in the geologic formation of the unit which was created by some sedimentary uplifting, intermittent streams, and differential weathering. Vegetative patterns represent a Douglas fir and mountain brush type. The mountainous areas are primarily covered with mountain mahogany and gambel's oak, with isolated stands of Douglas fir and aspen found in the draws and ravines. The unit appears to be affected primarily by natural forces with only minor imprints of man remaining. Some of these imprints are three ways and a reservoir that exist in the unit's western portion. In the eastern portion the minor imprints of man include four ways, two fencelines, and one structure. All of these have a minimal impact on the area's naturalness.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

This unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude. Steep terrain in a relatively small area restricts the freedom of motion and increases the chances to encounter others who might be present. Throughout much of the western portion the chances of seeing people is further increased by the heavy cover of mountain brush that funnels visitors into those few open areas conducive to travel. Collectively there are limited opportunities for people to be separated from one another in the canyons, due mainly to their short and straight formation plus a lack of side canyon development.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Hunter Canyon unit does not contain outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The irregular shape of the area, the steep slopes and short canyons tend to restrict the freedom of movement within the unit. This topographic situation, in addition to the thick vegetative growth creates a setting where activities are extremely limited to only a few places suited for hiking or horseback riding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

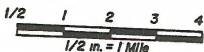
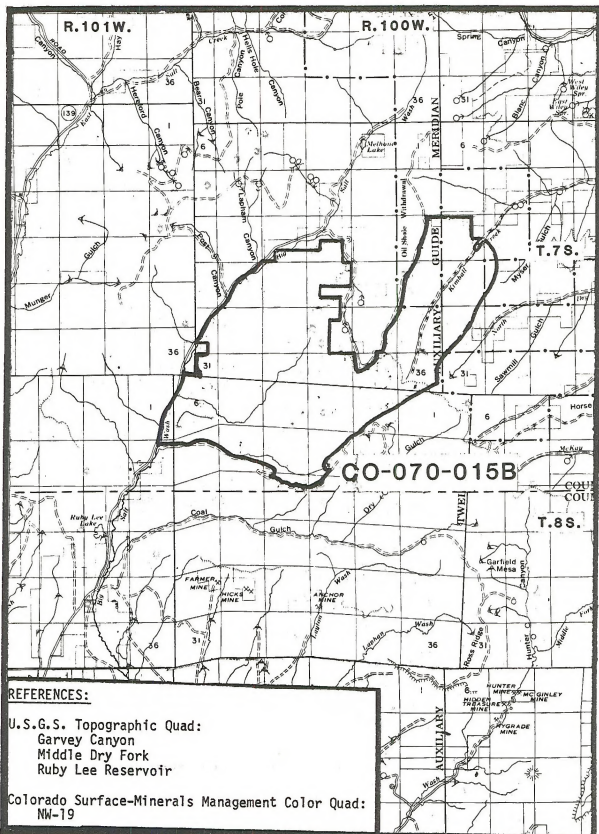
No supplemental values are known to occur within the boundaries of the Hunter Canyon area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

The Hunter Canyon area contains no significant imprints of man that would necessitate rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Hunter Canyon unit is of sufficient size (13,000 acres) to make practicable its preservation and use in an unpaired condition. The entire unit is primarily natural and appears to be affected by the forces of nature. However, due to the area's topographic situation of steep slopes, short canyons, irregular configuration and vegetation patterns, the unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Consequently, the unit does not meet all the criteria necessary for a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 12,800 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-0158
Area Name Garvey Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Twenty miles north of Grand Junction (Garfield County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit contains 12,800 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. During the initial inventory this unit was not recommended for intensive inventory until public input indicated wilderness values might be present. One boundary adjustment was made in the intensive inventory to omit a maintained road. The majority of the unit is covered by existing grazing leases, while the entire unit is covered by oil and gas leases. Perference right lease applications for coal exist in the western portion of the unit. Contiguous lands include public lands on all boundaries, with some private land to the west and north.

NATURALNESS:

The Green River Formation is evident in most of the unit with the chalk-colored cliffs being a prime example of the forces of nature acting upon this formation. Elevations within the unit vary from 8,200 feet to 6,200 feet. The western part of the unit is characterized by several canyon systems that branch east and north from the western boundary. The canyon slopes are steep and are covered with dense mountain brush and some pinyon and juniper trees. The eastern portion is composed of the Kimball Creek Valley, undulating slopes, and part of the flat ridge line on both sides of the valley. Some dense stands of Douglas fir characterize the steep slopes of the valley. Only a few minor imprints of man are contained within the unit. They include four ways, two fence lines, and a reservoir. Two of the ways have had no construction and the other two have had only small sections that are benchcut. These benchcut areas are relatively small in relationship to the total length of the ways. The reservoir is silted in and considered inactive. All of these imprints are considered to have a low impact on naturalness.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude exist within some portions of the Garvey Canyon area, however, these opportunities are not considered to be outstanding. Steeply sloping hillsides along the edges of Big Salt Wash and Garvey Canyon lack opportunities for solitude due to the open nature of these hillsides, which offers limited topographic or vegetative screening. As a result, people are unable to completely isolate themselves from each other on these slopes. The lack of dense vegetation cover along these hillsides creates an unrestricted view of others that may be in the same area. The narrow projection of the unit which includes the upper portion of Kimball Creek consists of a single main drainage which tends to act as a funnel for people using this portion of the unit. The presence of numerous smaller side drainages does offer some opportunities for solitude, although these are not outstanding in character. In addition, the irregular configuration of the whole unit also limits the opportunities for solitude since only a small, central portion of the area has the capability to isolate people from one another.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Garvey Canyon Area does not contain outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, although some opportunities do exist in some of the unit. The irregular shape of the area tends to restrict the freedom of movement within the area. Steeply sloping hillsides vegetated with a mountain brush community type have little potential for providing outstanding primitive recreation. Opportunities for hiking or other activities in the panhandle portion of the area in conjunction with extreme topographic variation limits the freedom of motion within the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

No supplemental values are known to occur within the boundaries of the Garvey Canyon area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

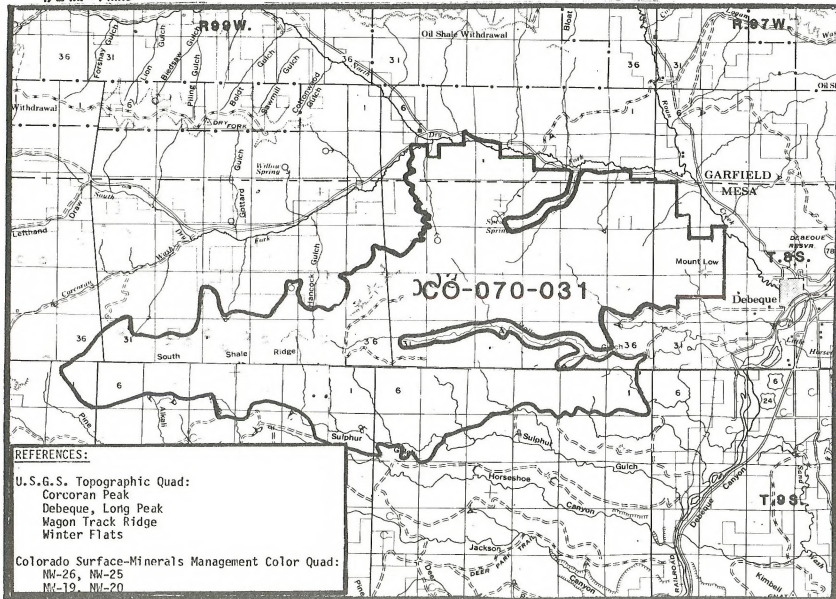
The Garvey Canyon area contains no significant imprints of man that would necessitate rehabilitation.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Garvey Canyon Unit contains 12,800 acres and is affected primarily by the forces of nature with only minor imprints of man occurring in the area. Opportunities for solitude are not considered to be outstanding due to an irregular configuration in conjunction with steeply sloping topography that provides limited topographic and vegetative screening. Primitive recreation opportunities are not considered to be outstanding as a result of a restricted movement arising from extreme topographic variation in association with an irregularly shaped unit. This area does not meet the criteria necessary for a Wilderness Study Area.

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Grand Junction District

1/2 1 2 3 4
1/2 in. = 1 Mile



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 28,740 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-031
Area Name South Shale Ridge

GENERAL LOCATION: Twenty miles northeast of Grand Junction (Mesa and Garfield Counties).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit was not originally recommended for intensive inventory, but public input in the initial inventory indicated the unit may have wilderness characteristics. Approximately 28,740 acres of public land are contained within the unit after boundary adjustments were made in the intensive inventory to add lands back in the SE corner of the unit and to exclude major imprints of man. The entire unit is covered by oil and gas leases, and grazing occurs throughout by BLM grazing permits. The unit is surrounded by public land administered by the BLM, with a few scattered private lands also occurring along the border.

NATURALNESS:

This unit predominately consists of an east-west trending ridge line. The colorful hues of the Wasatch Formation characterize much of the area south of the ridgeline. Elevations within the unit range from 5,000 to 8,000 feet. Several drainage cuts and valley systems lead from the ridge to the boundaries. Coon Hollow is a small valley in the southeast quadrant of the unit. Pinon-Juniper growth is sparse in most areas and is concentrated on the more gently sloping hillsides and flat terrain. Imprints within the unit consist of ways, reservoirs, and fence lines. There are six ways within the unit with four of them having had partial initial construction. Four of them are less than 1/2 mile in length and are revegetating and are not regularly maintained. One active and three inactive reservoirs exist within the unit. The active reservoir is natural appearing and does not affect the naturalness of the unit. The three fence lines that exist are short in length and are considered to have a minimal impact on naturalness. Overall, the unit appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The unit does not contain outstanding opportunities for solitude. The unit's ridgeline has steep slopes and limited vegetative screening that generally allows for open views, which reduces opportunities for solitude since people are able to view each other. The Coon Hollow area in the southeast quadrant has benches, canyons and pinon-juniper cover that provide opportunities for solitude, however, these opportunities are not considered to be outstanding. The northwest quadrant offers more than 10 drainages that do provide solitude in a rolling, pinon-juniper landscape. The short length of these drainages in conjunction with the steep slopes that occur at their ends, limits the opportunities for solitude. The unit's narrow configuration reduces opportunities for solitude since people are concentrated into a relatively small area.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present in the South Shale Ridge unit but they are not considered outstanding. Landscape variety, easy access into most portions of the unit, interesting flora and geologic features, and scenic qualities combine to provide opportunities for hiking, scenic viewing, observing of nature, and photography. Primitive recreation opportunities are also affected by the narrow configuration of the unit which inhibits unconfined movement within the area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

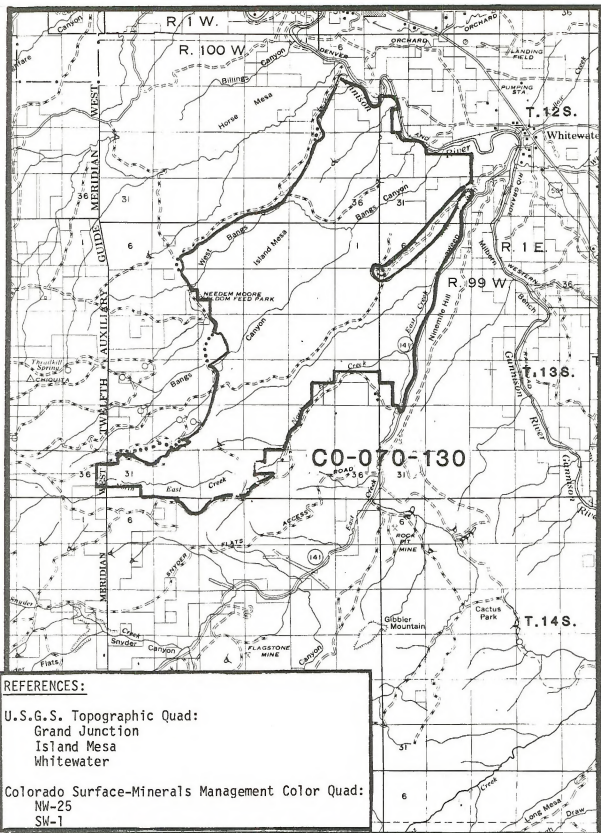
Several supplemental values are found in the unit, including a highly scenic area on the southwestern ridgeline and a threatened species of cactus (Sclerocactus glaucus).

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

This unit does not possess any major imprints of man, therefore, rehabilitation potential need not be addressed.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The South Shale Ridge inventory unit is of sufficient size (28,740 acres) and retains its primeval character with only minor imprints of man occurring in the area. Outstanding opportunities for solitude do not exist in the unit as a result of the area's narrow configuration, moderate vegetation cover, and steeply sloping topography. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also considered to be less than outstanding. Supplemental values include outstanding scenery in the unit and the presence of a threatened cactus species. The area does not meet the criteria necessary for a Wilderness Study Area.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 21,130 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-130
Area Name Bangs Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Six miles south of Grand Junction (Mesa County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The unit is located along the northeastern edge of Pinon Mesa, which is part of the Uncompahgre Plateau. The 64,000 acre Bangs Canyon unit was originally not selected for intensive inventory. Public comment in conjunction with field checks showed a part of the Bangs Canyon unit, with an acreage of 21,500 acres, to be primarily natural. The initial inventory unit boundaries for Bangs Canyon were roads, private land, and the Gunnison River. During intensive inventory five boundary adjustments were made to exclude unnatural areas, deleting 370 acres. The remaining 21,130 acres are roadless and natural. None of the unit is leased for oil and gas. All of the unit is leased for livestock grazing. No easements, rights-of-way or active mining operations exist within the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The Bangs Canyon unit is characterized by two major canyons draining off the east side of Pinon Mesa with many side drainages. Vegetation includes pinyon-juniper woodland, pockets of cottonwoods, and willows, and on the higher mesas and upper North East Creek ponderosa pine, oakbrush, and isolated pockets of aspen and Douglas fir. Most of man's imprints within this unit have occurred on the mesas. These include some stock reservoirs, several ways, and some fences. These imprints create a low to moderate impact on just their immediate vicinities, but overall do not adversely affect the unit's naturalness. Both of the canyon systems are free of man's imprints.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude do exist in the unit but these are not considered outstanding when compared with other mesa and canyon systems. The two main forks of Bangs Canyon are relatively straight and provide limited screening. However, some of the side drainages do meander and provide screening of people from each other. The limited extent of the canyon system tends to concentrate people and reduce opportunities for solitude. The pinyon-juniper woodland which occurs throughout most of the unit provides good screening, but much of the lower area is very open and screening is limited. An intimate type of solitude where the topography or vegetation creates an enclosed feeling of isolation is present in the Bangs Canyon area but not at the outstanding level. Opportunities for a specially oriented type of solitude exist in the unit where views within the area as well as vistas of distant landforms can also be found. However, such opportunities for spatial solitude are common in the region.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation do not exist within the unit when such opportunities are compared to other mesa and canyon systems in the region. Opportunities for hiking, backpacking, scenic viewing, and horseback riding exist within the Bangs Canyon unit, but none of these are considered outstanding. The diverse topography of the unit is one of the primary landscape features contributing to primitive recreation opportunities but such landscapes are common. East Creek and the other drainages within the unit add more diversity to the landscape for these types of recreation as do the small mesas located between the drainages but such landscapes are common in the region. Opportunities for scenic viewing are not considered outstanding because the unit's scenery as well as distant views of areas outside of the unit are common in the Uncompahgre Plateau. The relatively large size and blocked configuration of this area does enhance opportunities for primitive recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

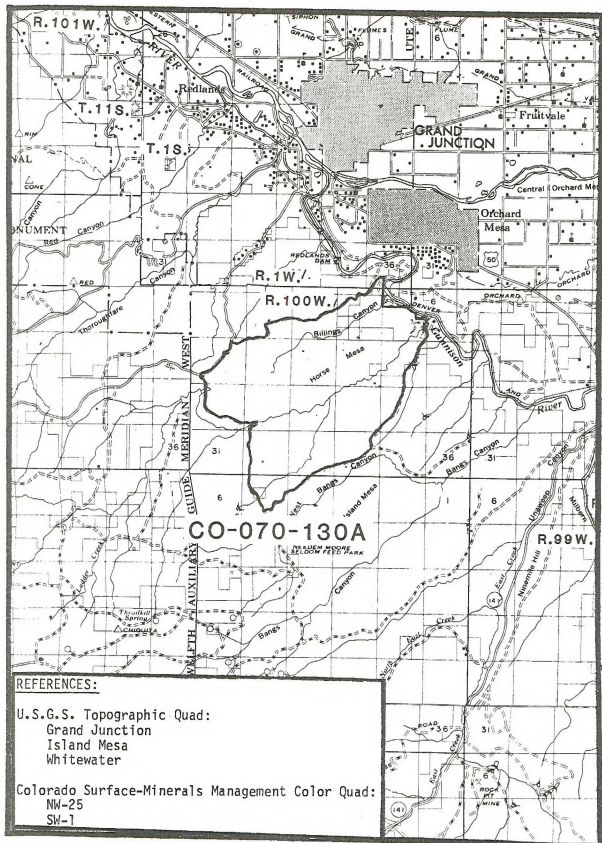
Several supplemental values exist within the unit. Bangs Canyon is located within six miles of Grand Junction and is thereby very accessible to its population. Cultural resources have been identified in many parts of the unit. Also, the unit has wildlife values in that the southern portion provides important deer winter range.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man which occur within the Bangs Canyon unit are considered to have a minor impact on the naturalness of the unit. Therefore, no rehabilitation measures are needed.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The 21,130 acres within the Bangs Canyon unit is of sufficient size to make practicable its use and preservation in an impaired condition. All of the imprints of man which occur within the area are considered to be minor, therefore, the area is considered to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are not present in the unit because the physical characteristics of the Bangs Canyon unit are common within the region. The Bangs Canyon unit contains several supplemental values which includes proximity to a large population center, cultural resource values as well as important winter habitat for deer. Since this unit does not meet all the criteria needed for a Wilderness Study Area, it is not recommended.



1/2 1 2 3 4
 1/2 in. = 1 Mile

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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	8,000 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-130A
District	Grand Junction	Area Name	Rough Canyon

GENERAL LOCATION: Three miles south of Grand Junction (Mesa County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Rough Canyon unit contains approximately 8,000 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The unit was not initially recommended for intensive inventory, but public input indicated that the unit might contain wilderness characteristics. This is the northern portion of initial inventory unit CO-070-130, which was found during the intensive inventory to be separated by a maintained road. Although no mining is taking place within the unit, several mining claims do exist. The unit is not leased for oil and gas. Grazing permits cover the entire unit. The unit is surrounded by mostly public lands, with a parcel of private lands lying to the northeast of the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The Rough Canyon unit is characterized by a sloping mesa-like terrain and two canyon drainages. Vegetation primarily consists of dense juniper stands in the higher elevations to grassy-saltbrush flats in the lower parts of the mesas. The canyons are generally wide and lacking in much vertical relief. Vegetation in the canyons consists primarily of piñon-juniper woodland with saltbrush, grasses, and a few isolated cottonwood trees in the drainage bottoms. All of the major impacts within this unit have occurred on the mesa-like terrain are related to range related projects such as fence lines, stock reservoirs, and access developments, all of which have created only a minimal impact to the naturalness of the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The Rough Canyon unit does not contain outstanding opportunities for solitude. The unit's relatively small size and topography concentrate and restrict travel patterns to the point where isolation is severely limited. A lack of vegetative screening throughout much of the unit, plus a drainage system showing little diversity or headward branching has likewise contributed to a situation not conducive to experiencing outstanding solitude.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Although the Rough Canyon unit contains some opportunities for various types of primitive recreation, these activities are not considered outstanding. The unit's topographic features and size are such that travel patterns would be concentrated within a few relatively small areas. Also, the combination of the lack of topographic diversity and relatively small size prevents visitors from experiencing variety in any recreational endeavor.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

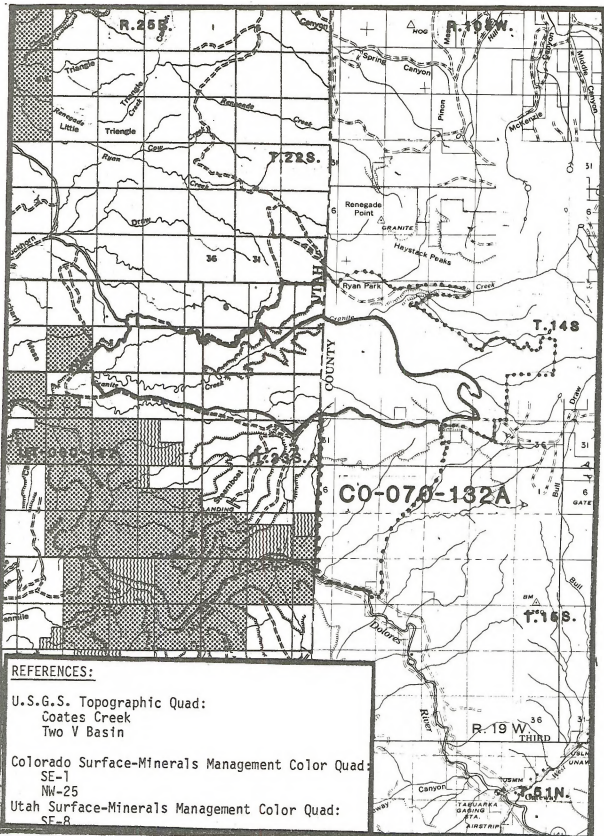
Several supplemental values have been noted in the unit, the primary one being archaeological resources. Rock art figures have been identified in Rough Canyon believed to be of the Fremont Culture. Petroglyphs and pictographs are common.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man which occur within the boundaries of the unit exist mainly on the mesas. The bulldozed fencelines present the most noticeable visual contrast, but given time the piñon-juniper forest should replenish itself.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The Rough Canyon unit is of sufficient size (8,000 acres) to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. The canyon portion of the unit is primarily natural and appears to be affected primarily by natural forces. Due to the area's small size and lack of topographic variety, the unit does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Supplemental values do exist within the unit, especially some significant archaeological ones. Overall, the unit does not meet all the criteria to be a Wilderness Study Area.



INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	CO - 3,120 acres UT - 4,800 acres Total - 7,920 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-132A UT-060-120
District	Grand Junction, CO Moab, Utah	Area Name	Granite Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Thirty-three miles southwest of Grand Junction (Mesa County, Colorado - Grand County, Utah).

The Granite Creek unit contains approximately 7,920 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Field investigation revealed the presence of several roads which divided the unit into seven sub-parts. All of these were less than 5,000 acres except the northern part of the original unit which was approximately 6,720 acres. It has been designated CO-070-132A and will be evaluated separately. A small parcel of 5 acres in Granite Creek was also excluded because of a major imprint. Unit UT-060-120 in the Moab BLM District is contiguous to the Granite Creek area. Both of these areas were evaluated as one unit during the intensive inventory. The Palisade Intensive inventory unit (CO-070-132) is adjacent to Granite Creek on the east. Boundaries of Granite Creek consist of a combination of roads, Utah State lands, and private lands. All of the unit is under oil and gas lease. Grazing occurs throughout the unit by BLM permit. No easements, rights-of-way or mining claims are known to exist in the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The Granite Creek unit includes two topographic divisions: Granite Creek Canyon and the mesa uplands. The canyon is the predominate feature of the unit. The portion of Granite Creek east of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 7, T. 23 S., R. 26 E., consists of a relatively wide, straight canyon which is approximately 500 to 800 feet deep. The western section of Granite Creek is about 3 air miles long, but is so twisting and meandering that its actual length is approximately 7 miles. The depth of this portion is about two hundred feet. Most of the eastern part has been impacted by the Granite Creek road. Canyon vegetation includes riparian zones, grasses and sagebrush in the flood plain and scattered piñon-juniper trees. The mesa uplands are predominately gently sloping piñon-juniper covered hillsides. Vegetation in the western part of the unit is primarily grasses, sagebrush and other shrubs. Imprints of man are negligible in most of the unit. Overall, the area appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude do exist in the unit, but are less than outstanding. The narrow shape of the unit varying from less than a mile to about two miles wide adversely affect opportunities for solitude within the unit boundaries. Terrain above the canyon rim is broadly sloping to hilly; vegetation is predominately piñon-juniper, ranging from moderately dense in the eastern end to sparse in the western end. The overall open characteristic of the topography and vegetation does not provide outstanding screening potential. The eastern portion of Granite Creek is relatively wide and straight, with the boundary road running down the center. The broad mesas overlook the narrow strip between the road and canyon walls, limiting opportunities for solitude. The western three miles of the canyon have a different character: narrow and meandering, generally less than 1/4 mile wide and 100 to 200 feet deep. Riparian vegetation provides some screening in a narrow strip along the creek. The limited extent of this type of topography and vegetative screening, especially in conjunction with the proximity of unit boundaries in this area, render opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within the unit are not outstanding. Recreational opportunities center around hiking, visual observation, hunting, and fishing. Recreational opportunities would in general be constrained by the narrow configuration of the unit. Hiking opportunities would be limited throughout the unit, except for the western end of Granite Creek Canyon, due to lack of focal features and challenging terrain. Backpacking in the western end of the canyon would be limited by its short extent. Opportunities for day hikes exist in this area, enhanced by high scenic values. However, the short extent of the western part of the canyon, the lack of challenging terrain, and its proximity to use boundaries render opportunities less than outstanding. The Dolores Triangle is known for deer hunting; opportunities in this unit exist but are not outstanding. The west end of Granite Creek has been stocked with brook trout and provides some fishing opportunities; however, these are limited in extent. There is no single recreational opportunity that is outstanding in nature due to challenge, uniqueness, or extent, nor is there a sufficient variety of recreational opportunities to provide outstanding opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

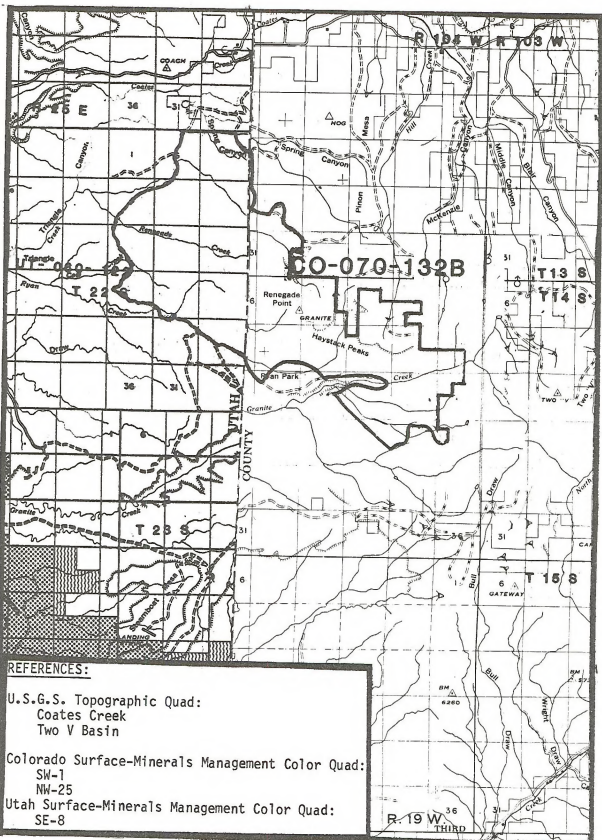
The supplemental values presented in this unit include geologic formations of educational value, an ideal habitat for raptors, and outstanding scenery. Granite Creek's tightly meandering course has created goosenecks displaying unusual pinnacles, fins and windows. Eagles, hawks, and owls appear to be nesting in the canyon area as well. The perennial water in lower Granite Creek and the trout fisheries are also supplemental values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man in the unit are considered to have a minor impact on naturalness. The ways will rehabilitate naturally if closed.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The unit is 7,920 acres and is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. The Granite Creek unit is highly natural and appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. Outstanding opportunities for solitude are lacking due to the area's narrow configuration and absence of dense vegetation. Opportunities for primitive recreation are considered to be less than outstanding due to the unit's narrow shape as well as the lack of focal features and challenging terrain. Supplemental values within the area include outstanding scenery, interesting geologic formations, perennial water and a trout fisheries in lower Granite Creek, as well as nesting sites for raptors including bald eagles. The Granite Creek unit does not meet all of criteria necessary for a Wilderness Study Area, and therefore it is not recommended.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	CO - 6,720 acres UT - 6,270 acres Total- 12,990 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-1328 UT-060-120
District	Grand Junction, CO Moab, Utah	Area Name	Renegade Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Thirty miles southwest of Grand Junction (Mesa County, Colorado - Grand County, Utah).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The Renegade Creek unit contains approximately 12,990 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Field investigation during the intensive inventory revealed the presence of roads that resulted in the northern part of Colorado's CO-070-1328 (Granite Creek) being completely separated and redesignated Renegade Creek, CO-070-1328. This unit was combined with Utah's UT-060-120 which includes approximately 6,270 acres. The Utah unit was further divided by a road in its southern part that resulted in 460 acres being excluded. Three major imprints areas required further modification of the boundaries. These were a chaining, a mining exploration area and a fence enclosure. All of the unit is under oil and gas lease. Grazing use occurs throughout the unit by BLM permit. No easements or rights-of-way occur in the unit. Some mining claims do exist along the Ryan Creek road.

NATURALNESS:

The Renegade Creek unit consists of three topographic divisions: mesas, mountain slopes, and creek bottoms. The mesas in the unit staircase from Pinon Mesa and include two isolated mesas in the western part of the unit. The mountain slopes in the unit are gently sloping along a north-south orientation or are very steep along a NW-SE orientation. Piñon-juniper woodlands are the dominant vegetation on these landforms, however, the upper mesas are covered with sagebrush and mountain brush. Creek bottoms are generally an open V-shape in configuration and have riparian vegetation. Renegade Creek is the major drainage in the unit and its lower channel has cut through a granite boulder field. Imprints of man in the unit are two reservoirs and associated ways. One reservoir occurs on the mesa top and the other on a gentle mountain slope. Both reservoirs and ways have a low to moderate impact on naturalness.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude are not considered to be outstanding. The area's narrow configuration limits opportunities for solitude since people are concentrated into an area that does not permit horizontal separation. The steeply sloping topography which occurs in the southern and eastern part of the unit tends to further limit opportunities for solitude since people would avoid these slopes, thus increasing the probability of encountering others in the flatter portions of the unit. The probability of encountering others in the Renegade Creek drainage is high since this is the only main canyon in the area and it is fairly straight and open in character, with only a moderate cover of riparian vegetation. Opportunities for solitude are further restricted by the open nature of the gently rolling, scattered piñon-juniper slopes in much of the Utah portion.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The Renegade Creek unit provides for hiking, horseback riding, scenic viewing, observation of nature, and photography but none are considered to be outstanding. The area's narrow configuration of 2 1/2 miles or less in conjunction with its steeply sloping topographic characteristics in the southern and eastern part of the unit inhibits the freedom of movement throughout the entire unit. Heavy mountain brush also restricts this movement in the upper elevations. The areas that can be used for primitive recreation are primarily the gently sloping, rolling, scattered piñon-juniper covered hills in the Utah and southeastern portions but these are very typical of much of the region and generally do not lend themselves to outstanding primitive recreation opportunities. Renegade Creek is the principal drainage in the unit. The drainage is open and V-shaped with limited areas of riparian vegetation. Trees along this water course are very scattered. Such drainages are common in the area. The general lack of interesting vegetation patterns and significant resource values further limit primitive recreation activities in this unit. Renegade Point is highly scenic but very steep slopes to its summit prevents horseback riding and limits hiking to the top of this promontory.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

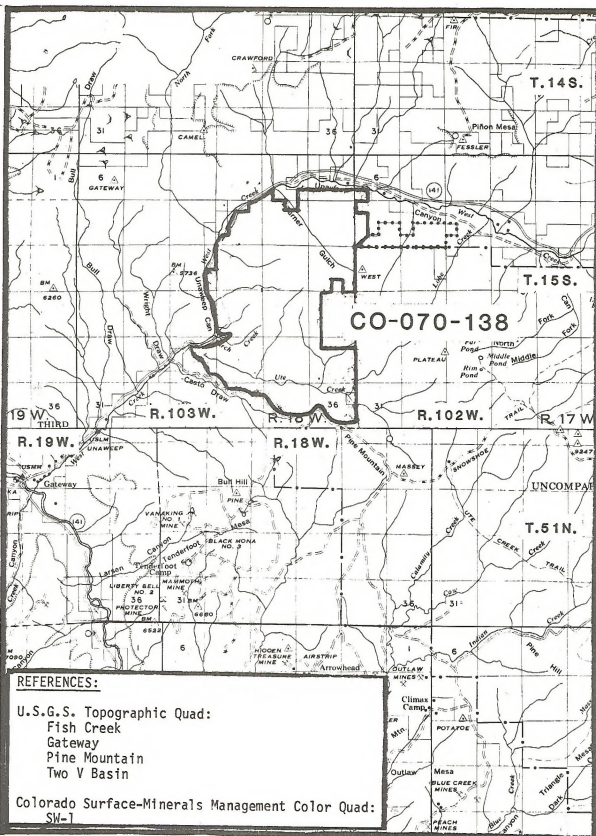
Supplemental values in the unit include the high scenic quality of Renegade Point and Haystack Peaks, as well as the geologic interpretive values of Pinon Mesa.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man which occur within the unit are considered to have low to moderate impacts on naturalness. Therefore, special rehabilitation efforts are not needed.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The combined acreages of contiguous inventory units CO-070-1328 and UT-060-120 is 12,990 acres which is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. The area is very natural and appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. However, the unit does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude due to the area's narrow configuration, the generally open nature of the western part of the unit, and the steeply sloping topography in the eastern and southern portion of the area. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation are considered to be less than outstanding due to the lack of interesting vegetative patterns, and significant resource values. Supplemental values include high scenic quality of the Renegade Peak area and geologic interpretive values. Overall, the unit does not meet all of the criteria to become a Wilderness Study Area.



1/2 1 2 3 4
 1/2 in. = 1 Mile

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size	8,360 acres	Inventory No.	CO-070-138
District	Grand Junction	Area Name	West Unaweep

GENERAL LOCATION: Five miles northeast of Gateway (Mesa County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

The West Unaweep unit contains approximately 8,360 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The boundaries of the unit were altered slightly during the initial inventory. One adjustment was made during the intensive inventory when a field check found that some range related roads and improvements existed in the extreme northeastern portion of the unit. Although no mining is taking place within the unit, several mining claims and oil and gas leases do exist. Grazing permits cover the entire unit. To the east of the unit lies a 680-acre private parcel and the Uncompahgre National Forest; to the north and east is a mixture of public and private lands, and to the south lie public lands.

NATURALNESS:

The West Unaweep unit varies in physiographic features from steep granite cliffs on the north to the thousand foot deep Ute Creek Canyon in the south. Also included are steep side canyons draining into the creek and a gently sloping mesa top. The forces of nature are apparent in the geologic structure of the unit which was created by an uplifting of the Uncompahgre Plateau, perennial and intermittent streams, and differential weathering. Vegetative patterns vary with the different geologic features. The unit contains areas of semiarid vegetation, riparian zones along the streams, and sagebrush/oakbrush/pinyon-juniper mixes on the higher elevations. There are also some isolated stands of aspen, ponderosa pine, and Douglas fir in the more moist areas. After boundary adjustments, only minor imprints of man remain in the unit. These imprints include a couple of old prospect sites, three ways, a spring development, and stock reservoirs in Turner Gulch, and in an unnamed draw to the east. Minor imprints of man can be found along Ute Creek in the form of an old fence line and a crudely developed spring. Aside from these minor impacts, the entire unit appears to be unaffected by man and influenced by natural forces.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Primarily, due to the unit's small size and topographic setting, the West Unaweep unit does not contain outstanding opportunities for solitude. The presence of a heavily travelled county-maintained road forming the southwestern boundary and Colorado Highway 141 following the northern boundary allows for a regular traffic flow to encompass the unit on three sides. Both Ute Creek and Unaweep Canyon are geologically structured in a way so that they act as natural echo chambers and transmit vehicular sounds to all portions of the unit. Topographic and vegetative screening are present throughout many different areas of the unit, but travel patterns are greatly restricted by dense oakbrush and rugged topography. These tend to concentrate people in the same area or along the same routes. The unit's small size and significant amount of vertical terrain further decrease opportunities for solitude, also, by concentrating people.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not present in the West Unaweep unit due to several factors. Activities such as hunting, horseback riding, backpacking, and general sightseeing are greatly restricted due in part to the unit's small size, rugged nature, and dense vegetation of the steep, narrow side canyons. In addition, a 680-acre parcel of private land forming part of the eastern boundary impedes good access to the mesa top, making it necessary to either cross the private land or locate another route via the side canyons. Thick oakbrush and pinyon-juniper stands likewise restrict most travel to the open sage flats on the mesa. In general, these factors provide the unit with less than outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

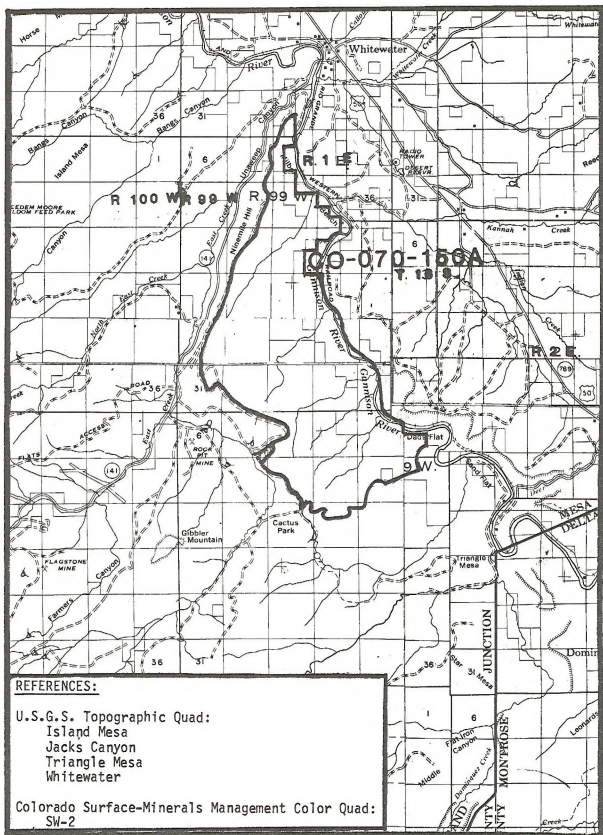
Several significant supplemental values exist within the West Unaweep unit. The mesa tops afford crucial winter habitat for mule deer and elk. The varied topography and elevation have created a diversity of habitats. The steep granite cliffs forming Unaweep Canyon are of scenic, scientific, and educational interest.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All imprints of man which occur within the adjusted boundaries of the unit are considered to have a minor impact on the unit's overall naturalness. Therefore, they do not require any special rehabilitation efforts.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The West Unaweep unit is of sufficient size (8,360 acres) to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. Most of the unit is primarily natural and appears to be affected essentially by natural forces. Some imprints, however, have occurred in Turner Gulch and are mainly related to grazing activities. Due to the area's size and physiographical situation the unit does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Some supplemental values do exist within the unit, especially some significant wildlife ones. Overall, the unit does not meet all the criteria to be a Wilderness Study Area and therefore is not being recommended.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 11,550 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-150A
Area Name Gunnison River

GENERAL LOCATION: Twelve miles southeast of Grand Junction (Mesa County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After boundary adjustments were made to exclude an area with significant cumulative impacts resulting from several reservoirs, a fence line, and an area with a road; approximately 11,550 acres of contiguous public land remained in the unit. The area is covered by existing grazing units, plus numerous mining claims are concentrated in the Nine Mile Hill Area. Several tracts of land have been withdrawn for federal power sites along the Gunnison River. The unit is bordered by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, private land, a transmission line, a communication site, and roads.

NATURALNESS:

The Gunnison River unit varies in topographic features from gently rolling hills and northwest trending canyons in the western portion to rugged, rocky slopes of the Morrison Formation and redrock canyons of the Entrada Formation in the eastern part. Differential weathering of the uplifted sedimentary layers along with the canyon erosion of the Gunnison River create a topographically diverse unit. Vegetative patterns range from a pinyon-juniper woodland on the plateau to barren slopes or riparian zones along the river. After boundary changes were made the unit appears to be affected primarily by the work of nature with only minor imprints remaining. These imprints are composed of ways and reservoirs and occur in the western portion of the unit. However, their cumulative impact on the naturalness of the entire unit is minimal.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The Gunnison River unit does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude. A scattered pinyon-juniper woodland together with a gently rolling relief in the western half, very steep open slopes generally devoid of shrub or trees in the eastern half, and the unit's narrow configuration, in combination limit opportunities to experience outstanding solitude. The canyons in the southeastern part of the unit provide solitude but the canyons are not well developed. They are relatively short, straight and have minimal branching to allow disbursement of people. A very steep slope that runs from the Gunnison River along the eastern boundary to an approximate north-south line in the center of the unit creates a very open landscape with an ease of visibility. Solitude is also limited by the unit's narrow configuration which varies from 1/4 mile to 2 1/2 to 3 miles.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not present in the unit. The unit's narrow configuration along with the steeply sloping nature of the eastern half restricts unconfined movement within the unit. The unit does provide for hiking, rockhounding, general observation of nature, scenic viewing, photography and floatboating, but none of these are considered outstanding. The lack of landscape diversity in the western half and the very steep slopes of the eastern half limit opportunities. Interesting rock formations and the Gunnison River in the eastern half, and redrock canyons in the southeastern part of the unit do provide focal features for hiking, nature observation and photography but these are relatively common in the region and are not considered to provide outstanding opportunities. The rockhounding materials in the unit, consisting of agates, petrified wood, and fossils, are also common in the region. Floatboating through the unit, although popular as a part of the longer Gunnison River trips, is very slow and presents little challenge because there are no rapids. Many scenic vistas can be seen from the rim overlooking the Gunnison River but these are not considered especially significant.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

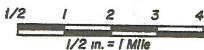
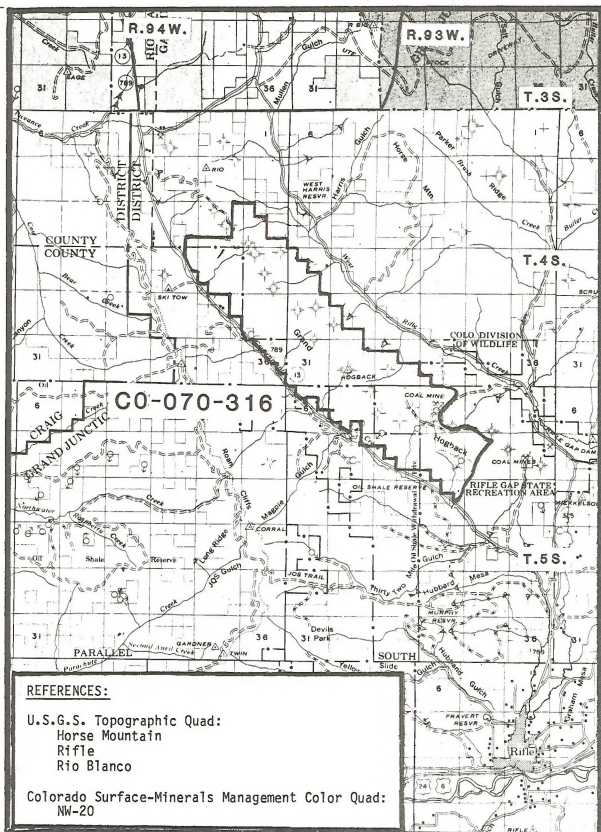
The unit's close proximity to the large urban area of Grand Junction is considered a supplemental value. Rockhounding values are present in the unit because of agates, fossils, and petrified wood that are commonly found in the region. Archaeological sites dating from the Fremont Culture and historic sites are cultural values found in the area.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

This unit does not possess any major imprints of man; therefore, rehabilitation efforts are not required.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Gunnison River unit is of sufficient size (11,550 acres) to make practicable its use in an unimpaired condition. The area retains its primal character with the forces of nature and their effect on the unit readily apparent, while those imprints of man that do occur are considered to be minor. Primarily due to the unit's narrow configuration, general lack of landscape diversity and other resource values, opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation do not exist in the unit. Supplemental values include proximity to Grand Junction, cultural, and rockhounding values. The unit is not recommended for a WSA because it does not have the required wilderness characteristics.



UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 8,550 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-316
Area Name Grand Hogback

GENERAL LOCATION: North of Rifle, southeast of Rio Blanco, north of U.S. highway 13 (Garfield County)

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

After boundary adjustments in the initial phase were made, approximately 8,550 acres of roadless and primarily natural land had been identified. No boundary adjustments were proposed during the intensive analysis. The configuration of the unit is approximately two miles wide and six to seven miles long, oriented southeast to northwest. All lands within the intensive study area are public lands administered by BLM. Along the western boundary are several parcels withdrawn for a silt reclamation project. Grazing allotments cover much of the area. Several oil and gas leases exist within the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The Grand Hogback unit is a rugged crest of a fault line which appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature. Several minor modifications of man, such as short distances of dead end fences or ways, occur along the periphery. All these imprints of man with the exception of one way are substantially unnoticeable within the intensive study unit due to steep topography and dense ground vegetation screening the modifications. The way consists of highly visible road cuts in the immediate area, incapable of rehabilitation, but due to the steep topography the way is provided with screening from a distance.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The intensive study area of the Grand Hogback unit possesses opportunities for solitude in the drainage bottoms. However, due to the narrow configuration of the unit, these opportunities for solitude are not outstanding. Although outside sights and sounds are generally not an acceptable factor in this inventory, the closeness of roads and heavy traffic volume on both sides of the unit in conjunction with the single ridgeline running the length of the entire unit cannot be ignored in this case. Very few chances for feelings of seclusion are available, and none can be considered outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Although the diversity of landforms and geological formations provide this area with ample opportunities for sightseeing and photography, the opportunities are not considered outstanding. The combination of small size, narrow configuration, and rugged terrain (limiting opportunities on foot) restrict any outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

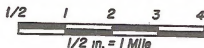
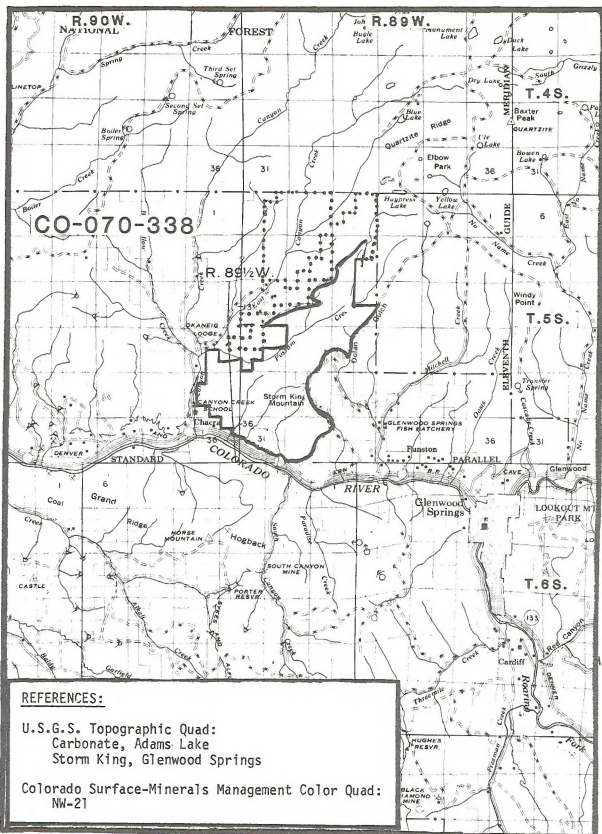
The geologic formation of the Hogback, sandstone outcroppings, and a natural arch give some geologic and scenic value to the unit. Nesting sites of red-tail hawk and golden eagle, documentation of black bear and the possibility of re-introducing bighorn sheep in the area give the unit some significant supplemental values.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Those impacts occurring within the intensive study unit are minimal. With the exception of the way coming in from the northern boundary, all impacts are capable of returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition by either natural processes or by hand labor. However, rehabilitation would not be feasible on the way coming in from the north due to the substantial cuts into the steep slopes.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are not offered in this unit. The narrow configuration in conjunction with the single steep rugged ridgeline running the length of the unit severely restricts any such opportunities. Outside sights and sounds cannot be ignored as they are inevitable throughout the entire length of the unit due to these same factors. Although the impact of the way in the northern portion is minimal to the unit as a whole, it does create an impairment to the naturalness in the immediate area and rehabilitation is infeasible. Therefore, the Grand Hogback unit does not meet the criteria for a WSA.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
Under Section 603
Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION

Size 4,660 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-338
Area Name Storm King

GENERAL LOCATION: Two and one-half miles west of Glenwood Springs; immediately north of I-70 (Garfield County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

A total of 2,440 acres were deleted from the unit during the intensive inventory in the northern portion to exclude a major way, ditch, trail, cabin, and fenceline, creating a serious impairment to the naturalness. The major way is the boundary of the deleted area and is constructed on steep slopes with highly visible cuts. After these boundary adjustments, acreage of potential intensive study area remaining is less than 5,000 acres, all administered by BLM. The unit is bounded by private and public lands. There is a stock driveway withdrawal in Sections 16, 17, 19, and 20. Oil and gas leases exist in the SW corner. Much of the unit is covered by existing grazing allotments.

NATURALNESS:

The Storm King unit is characterized by rugged topography and contrasting vegetation types from aspen and fir to scrub oak and bare exposed red rock. The naturalness of the unit is disrupted by the impacts of grazing, a stock driveway along Possum Creek, a way that dead ends in the unit entering from the eastern boundary, and a dry reservoir, all of which create only a minimal impact to the natural state of the unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The type of solitude available in the Storm King unit is not uncommon in the surrounding local and regional area and not considered outstanding. Because of the irregular configuration of the unit, small size, and steep topography, isolation is severely limited. The unit's opportunities for solitude cannot be considered to be outstanding.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The small size, irregular configuration, and rugged topography of the unit diminish the value of the primitive and unconfined types of recreation, therefore offering no outstanding opportunities. The topography and dense scrub oak vegetation is confining, limiting travel to the ridge along Storm King Mountain, Possum Creek, and a few intermittent streambeds off of Possum Creek. A natural transportation route within the unit north to south or east to west does not exist without a substantial physical barrier in the form of extremely steep topography and dense vegetation to impair travel. The irregular configuration presents a definite conflict to the unconfined nature of recreation, limiting the amount of area available.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

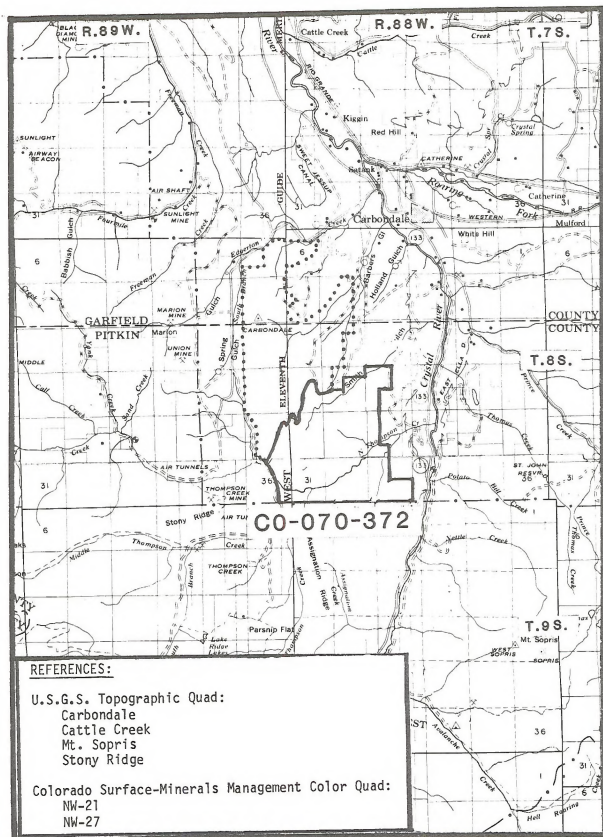
The unit is within five miles of Glenwood Springs, allowing close access to a population center of approximately 6,000.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

Most evidences of man have been eliminated from the intensive inventory unit. Along Possum Creek, evidence of grazing is apparent and will continue as long as the stock driveway is in regular use. Presently, the impact is minimal. The area will naturally rehabilitate if grazing use is discontinued in this specific locale. The way would be difficult to rehabilitate due to deep cuts into steep, rocky slopes.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

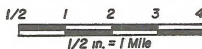
The Storm King unit is a relatively small tract of land which is irregularly shaped and extremely rugged. Upon elimination of major imprints of man, the unit does not meet the 5,000 acre criteria for a W.S.A. The size of the intensive study unit does approach the required 5,000. Due to the irregular shape and rugged topography, outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation do not exist. Therefore, the Storm King unit does not meet the necessary criteria for a W.S.A.



REFERENCES:

U.S.G.S. Topographic Quad:
 Carbondale
 Cattle Creek
 Mt. Sopris
 Stony Ridge

Colorado Surface-Minerals Management Color Quad:
 NW-21
 NW-27



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size 4,200 acres
District Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-372
Area Name Thompson Creek

GENERAL LOCATION: Southwest of Carbondale and U.S. Highway 82; south of Glenwood Springs (Pitkin County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Approximately 4,330 acres in the northern half of the unit were deleted during the intensive inventory. This deletion was made after several major ways were documented in this portion of the unit, especially a way bisecting the unit NE to SW constructed with cuts into steep slopes with many dead end ways leading from it. After deleting this northern portion from the unit, approximately 4,200 acres of primarily natural land administered by BLM exist, therefore, making the unit of insufficient size for wilderness consideration. Two grazing allotments exist within the unit. Past coal mining activity and a potential for O&G and sand and gravel all exist within the unit. An oil and gas lease exists in Section 29 but no exploration has been conducted and none is anticipated before the expiration date in March 1982.

NATURALNESS:

The Thompson Creek unit is primarily characterized by the unique geological formations found along the Thompson Creek Canyon which remains in a relatively natural condition. Spruce-fir and riparian habitat characterize the Thompson Creek area. The dense pinyon-juniper, oak brush vegetation typical of the northeastern portion provides effective screening for the imprints of man occurring in this area. These included a trail with a few deteriorating stone abutments from an old railway, trail register and rail fence, way, fenceline, reservoir, and abandoned gold mine. The intensive study unit appears to be primarily affected by the forces of nature and is provided with effective vegetative screening for the minor imprints of man that do exist.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

The Thompson Creek unit does have opportunities for solitude due to the topographic character of the steep rock walls, numerous gulches and pinyon-juniper and spruce-fir vegetative screening. Thompson Creek itself provides opportunities for isolation and the northern portion of the unit also offers some additional opportunities. However, due to the small size of the unit and limited travel routes because of extremely steep cliff walls, the existing opportunities are definitely restricted and are not considered to be outstanding in a wilderness context.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive types of recreation do exist within the unit due to the unique geologic formations and diverse forms of vegetation and wildlife, but the unconfining nature of the recreation criteria cannot be met. Opportunities for hiking and backpacking, fishing, hunting, sightseeing, nature study, photography, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing all exist within the unit. Although there are diverse and numerous activities available, the small size of the unit and limited transportation routes (due to the nearly vertical cliff walls along the short 2½ mile length of Thompson Creek) severely restricts the unconfining nature of the recreation criteria. Therefore, outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfining recreation do not exist in the Thompson Creek unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

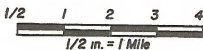
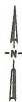
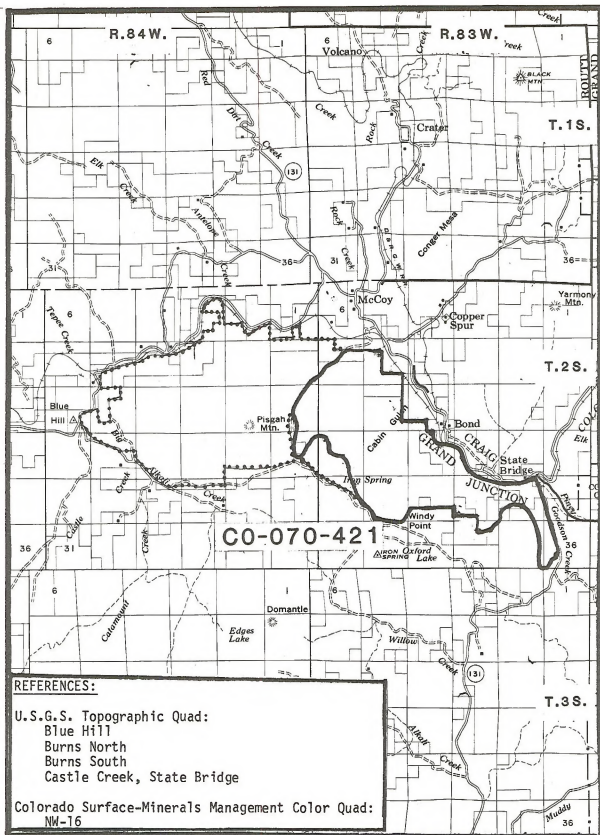
The Thompson Creek area was proposed as a Natural Environmental Area in 1974 and an Environmental Analysis Report was prepared. In 1975, a Management Plan was written for the Thompson Creek N.E.A. as well as plans for an Outdoor Education Program. In 1976 an Antiquities Report was prepared for the N.E.A. This area encompasses the Intensive Study Area of the Thompson Creek unit. Cultural and historical interest is cultivated from evidence of Ute Indian folklore, the discovery of a dinosaur footprint and remains of an old railway.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All modifications of man within the intensive study unit have a minimal impact or are capable of returning to a substantially unnoticeable condition (way, fenceline, reservoir) either by natural processes or by hand labor.

RATIONAL FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AS A W.S.A.:

The Thompson Creek unit consists of 4,200 acres making it of insufficient size to be considered for further study. Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation exist but due to the small size, these opportunities are not unconfining in nature. For this same reason, opportunities for solitude are not outstanding. Therefore, the Thompson Creek unit does not meet the criteria for a W.S.A.



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INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY
 Under Section 603
 Federal Land Policy and Management Act
 Grand Junction District

UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Size
District

6950 acres
Grand Junction

Inventory No. CO-070-421
Area Name Pisgah Mountain

GENERAL LOCATION: West of State Bridge on State Highway 131 (Eagle County).

SIZE/OWNERSHIP:

Approximately 8,100 acres in the western portion of the unit were deleted in the intensive analysis. Seven ways with associated forks (concentrated in the southern half of the deleted area) have been documented, several of which are major impairments due to cuts into steep slopes. Developed springs, reservoirs and fencelines in the deleted area also impaired the naturalness due to their close proximity in a limited amount of area. Approximately 6,950 acres of BLM administered land to the east were found to be roadless and primarily in a natural state. Oil and gas leases and grazing allotments occur within this portion of the unit. Silver and gold placers have been reported along the Colorado River. A powerline withdrawal exists along the northern boundary.

NATURALNESS:

The steep, rolling topography and red rock cliffs along the river accentuate the natural features within the Pisgah Mountain unit. The occasional aspen stands and spruce-fir provide a transition from the typical piñon-juniper, scrub oak, sagebrush, and dry rocky grassland vegetation that dominates the unit. Within the intensive study area the land remains primarily affected by the forces of nature. A few minor modifications of man occur near the boundaries (ways, fenceline, and reservoirs), but the imprint of man is substantially unnoticeable due to the effective vegetative screening and varied topography.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are not attainable in the Pisgah Mountain unit due to the steep topography, sparse vegetation and narrow configuration. The possible transportation routes are limited by the rugged terrain and narrowness of the unit, therefore, restricting the available solitude. The lack of vegetative screening provides no barriers from sights and sounds of other individuals or distractions. The close proximity of roads and development (e.g. ranch operations, large powerline, oil and gas exploration activities) disrupt feelings of solitude and resulting sights and sounds are clearly observable throughout the unit. Therefore, outstanding opportunities for solitude do not exist in this unit.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for sightseeing, photography, hunting, and river rafting are available in the unit. The opportunities available in this unit are not uncommon in this area. The steep topography and narrow configuration somewhat limit these opportunities or confine them to a relatively small portion of the unit. These opportunities are not considered to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The presence of the Colorado River adjacent to the unit enhances the scenic qualities of the area and provides an interesting contrast in ecosystems from the typical dry, rocky grassland area throughout the remaining portion of the unit.

POSSIBILITY OF CERTAIN AREAS RETURNING TO A NATURAL CONDITION:

All impacts that occur within the intensive study unit are minimal. Due to the dry, rocky alkaline soil the process of natural rehabilitation of the existing ways would be slow. The reservoirs have begun to revegetate naturally, and eventually will be unnoticeable.

RATIONALE FOR NOT RECOMMENDING AREA AS A W.S.A.:

The unit is long and narrow, averaging less than two miles wide. The aspect of the unit is northerly so that one is always oriented toward the traffic corridor (railway and auto) between McCoy and State Bridge. The narrow configuration, steep terrain, and sparse vegetation all severely restrict any outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. Therefore, the Pisgah Mountain unit does not meet the criteria for a W.S.A.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

NAME _____

INVENTORY NUMBER _____

(Unit on which you are commenting)

ADDRESS _____

DATE _____

During the Initial Inventory, which involved field checks and a public review, inventory units were identified which were roadless and of adequate size. These are the inventory units about which you are now commenting. An inventory unit will be designated a Wilderness Study Area (WSA) if, in addition to being roadless and of adequate size, it has wilderness characteristics as defined in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964, as required by Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. These wilderness characteristics are listed below with a space for your comments. More specifics on how these factors are evaluated by the BLM are found in the Public Participation section of the *Proposed Wilderness Study Area* booklet and the *BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook*, dated September 1978.

PLEASE NOTE: Other resource values and potential conflicts are not a consideration in the designation of Wilderness Study Areas. These considerations will be addressed during the study phase of the wilderness review, which will begin after September 1980.

NATURALNESS

Does the area generally appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable?

SOLITUDE OR PRIMITIVE, UNCONFINED RECREATION

Do outstanding opportunities for either exist?

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES

Does the unit contain ecological, geological, or other values? (The presence of supplemental values is not a prerequisite for an area to qualify as a WSA)

RECLAMATION

Can the imprints of man in the unit be reclaimed to a substantially unnoticeable condition?

OTHER COMMENTS:

DOES THIS INVENTORY UNIT QUALIFY AS A WILDERNESS STUDY AREA? YES NO

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